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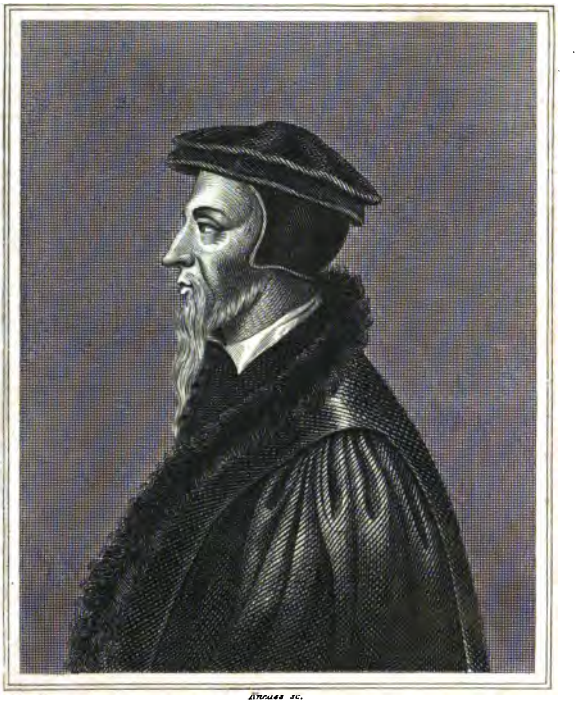

Ames sc.

John Calvin

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

JOHN CALVIN.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF

The Reformation.

BY

JOHN MACKENZIE.

Printed from the last London Edition, with Additions.

" Non tamen omnino potuit mors invida totum
Tollere Calvinum terris; æterna manebunt
Ingenii monumenta tui: et livoris iniqui
Languida paulatim cum flamma resederit, omnes
Religio qua pura nitet se fundet in oras
Fama tui."

Buchanan Poemat.

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TO THE

PROTESTANT DISSENTING MINISTERS

OF THE

THREE DENOMINATIONS,

IN LONDON AND ITS VICINITY;

IN ADMIRATION OF

THEIR PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE INTERPOSITION

ON BEHALF OF THE

PERSECUTED FRENCH PROTESTANTS;

THIS LIFE

OF ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL FOUNDERS

OF THE

REFORMED CHURCH IN FRANCE,

Is Inscribed,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT *to the* SECOND EDITION.

The Author has availed himself of the opportunity, furnished by a Second Edition, to make such alterations, and, he hopes, improvements, as may confer upon his performance the character of a New Work.

Having suppressed the greater part of the "Historical Appendix" in the former edition, he has been enabled to extend the Biography of Calvin, and to enter more into the detail of his times.

The interest which has lately been excited on the subject of the Reformation, will, he trusts, be extended to the Memoirs of one of its principal Promoters, who, inferior to none of his contemporaries in zeal, excelled them all in learning, and in important published Works.

LONDON,
January, 1818.

PREFACE.

THE great importance of Biography, as a medium of public instruction, appears to be very generally admitted. Curiosity, a principle of active and extended influence, ever in quest of gratification, cannot be too early supplied with interesting and instructive objects, by an acquaintance with which intellectual attainments and moral improvement may be happily promoted. To render Biography conducive to these ends, it is obviously necessary, that genuine and attainable excellence of character be carefully attended to in the selection of subjects; as the exhibition of spurious morality, or unattainable perfection, must necessarily defeat the moral effect of the most alluring narrative. Excellence of character, arising from a great variety of causes, must be estimated chiefly by its moral influence; and it is principally under this view, that the enlightened biographer will choose to

portray the subjects of his history. As genuine religion forms the basis of public morality, as well as of private virtue, it is certain that national prosperity and individual happiness must be wholly indebted for their maturity to such an association. To expect elevation of character, either national or individual, upon any other principle, is to seek (in the expressive language of the highest authority) to "gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles."

How far these views of biography are just in themselves, or have been illustrated in the following Work, it is not for the author to determine. The great variety of opinion existing on the character and sentiments of the subject of these Memoirs, renders an attempt to illustrate them compatible, at least, with the general ends of Biography. Entertaining the highest veneration for the character which he has attempted to portray, the author has aimed at clearing it from those aspersions, which have their foundation in ignorance and malevolence alone.

While he has thus been anxious to vindicate an injured name, it will, he trusts, be apparent, that he has not been influenced by blind partiality or sectarian zeal. So far as he is

acquainted with his own motives, he feels no hesitation in avowing, that they are such as he wishes to carry with him, unaltered, to the grave. If an attempt to rescue a great character from the *fangs of calumny*, and to vindicate the doctrines of the glorious Reformation, should expose the author to the shafts of opprobrious censure, he will be abundantly compensated by the verdict of an approving conscience, and the sanction of discriminating readers.

When it is considered that the public is not in possession of any detached life of Calvin, in English, there can be no doubt but that such a work, executed with care and impartiality, must be considered a desideratum in Evangelical Biography.

With respect to the arrangement of the several parts, the author has adopted that which appeared to him, upon the whole, the most eligible.

It will be sufficiently obvious to every intelligent reader, that the materials for the Work have been derived from the most authentic sources, most of which are acknowledged. In addition to the Narrative of Beza, the author has to confess considerable obligations to a living author, Monsieur J. Senebier, of

whose excellent work, entitled, "Histoire Litteraire de Genève," he has made considerable use.

Confident that the general principles maintained in the following pages require no apology, the author commends them to HIS blessing, whose glory they are intended to promote, and who alone can render them really and extensively useful.

J. M.

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A

BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

History of the Reformation.

SKETCH

OF THE

REFORMATION.

TO those persons who are adequately impressed with the advantages resulting from the glorious Reformation, a brief sketch of its history will not fail to prove interesting. Nor will the lessons of practical wisdom, which such a subject affords, be overlooked by the intelligent Reader, who will so distinguish principles, and discriminate character, as to derive ample improvement from the varied scene which may pass in review before him.

Dark and dreary as was the night of superstition, during which luxurious priests revelled in wanton profligacy, its termination, decreed by Infinite Goodness, slumbered not. The means by which the reign of spiritual tyranny was to be overthrown, did not indeed form the subject of prophecy; nor could the most penetrating mind have developed

their certain issue. The indignation of individuals, excited by particular abuses, appears, however, to have proved essentially useful in demolishing the hoary pile of corruption, as in the instances of Wickliffe, and of Luther in particular. Disgusted with the shameless profligacy of the Mendicant orders, and with the conduct of the Popes their patrons, Wickliffe threw off all restraint, and, despising the superstition of the times, exhorted the laity to study the Scriptures, which he translated into English.

Persecution against reputed heretics now raged with tremendous fury. John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, men of exalted piety and considerable distinction in Bohemia, had made themselves many enemies among the clergy, by their disinterested and spirited remonstrances. Huss, in particular, had exasperated the See of Rome, by his attempts to detach the university of Prague from the papal jurisdiction of Gregory XII. Summoned to appear before the Council of Constance, and furnished with a safe-conduct from the Emperor Sigismund, the process against him was precipitated with all the ardour of ecclesiastical zeal. On the 6th day of July, 1415, he was led to the fatal pile, where he suffered death with an heroic constancy worthy of the cause which he had espoused.

Prompted by a generous solicitude to support his persecuted friend, Jerome hastened to the Council. Terrified, however, by the prospect of a cruel death, he was induced to make some concessions; but soon recovering his fortitude, he professed anew the opinions which he had for a moment abandoned, and illustrated their sublime efficacy in the flames, in which he expired on the 30th of May, 1416.

The principles of these heroic men, immortal as their spirits, survived the flames which had destroyed their bodies; nor was the cry from under the altar unheard. Their blood proved indeed "the seed of the church," and produced the fruits of which Britons now so richly partake.

The dawn of the sixteenth century, serene and mild, predicted a day of tranquillity; nor had the Roman pontiffs, apparently, any cause to apprehend those storms which were about to burst upon them. The Waldenses, Albigenses, and Beghards, together with the Bohemians, were "vanquished, though unsubdued." *The strong man armed kept his goods in peace, little suspecting that a stronger than he was about to dispossess him.* The causes, however, which contributed to the overthrow of Anti-christ, were various and irresistible. Amongst these, the revival of learning in Europe,

and the sudden appearance of a number of men of genius, served like so many constellations to cheer and illuminate the night of ignorance and of superstition. The Colloquies of Erasmus in particular, as they contained a great deal of pungent satire against the Monks, excited their warmest indignation, and induced them to say that "Erasmus laid the egg, which Luther hatched." The operation of learning in counteracting abuses sanctioned by antiquity, was, however, very gradual; as it had to contend not only with the ignorance which identifies the utility of a custom with its antiquity, and thus consecrates abuses; but also with a legislative authority, ever upon the alert against every thing exploded under the name of innovation, possessed also of affluence to bribe, and power to punish.

Julius II. dying in the year 1512, he was succeeded, in 1513, by Leo X. of the family de Medici. Leo, though of a milder disposition than his predecessor, was equally indifferent about the interests of real religion. A man of letters, and a man of pleasure, his time was divided between conversation with men of letters and pleasure, though the latter engrossed by far the larger proportion. He was remarkable for prodigality, luxury, and imprudence; nor has this holy father escaped the

charge of impiety and atheism. He is not, however, to be accused of neglecting the object so dear to all his predecessors,—that of aggrandizing the Holy See. He took, therefore, the utmost care that nothing should be transacted in the Council of the Lateran, which Julius left sitting, that had the remotest tendency to the reformation of the church. He went indeed still farther; and in a conference with Francis I. King of France, at Bologna, engaged that monarch to abrogate the Pragmatic Sanction, and to substitute another body of laws, under the title of the *Concordate*, which was received by his subjects with the utmost indignation and reluctance.

To those who are acquainted with the entire influence of superstition over the minds which it once pervades, and the ingenious policy of interested priests in supporting and propagating it, the overthrow of the papal hierarchy, and the establishment of principles of the most contrary genius, effected without the intervention of external violence, must appear to be the result of a presiding Providence, which frequently illustrates its potent energy, in accomplishing events the most important, by the agency of means the most apparently inadequate. So degraded indeed was Christianity at this period, that, though the reformers pretended to no miracu-

lous assistance, it is evident that the same hand which first planted Christianity, superintended the reformed faith from its early rise to its perfect maturity.

Immense as were the revenues of the pontificate, the prodigality, luxury, and magnificence of Leo, exhausted the coffers of the church. Money being indispensable to the voluptuous state and splendid projects of the pontiff, recourse was had to the never-failing expedient of a sale of indulgences, or remittances from the pains of purgatory.* The right of promulgating these indulgences in Germany, as well as a share of the profits arising from them, was

* According to the doctrine of the Romish church, all the good works of the Saints, over and above those which were necessary towards their own justification, are deposited, together with the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, in one inexhaustible treasury. The keys of this were committed to Saint Peter, and to his successors the Popes, who may open it at pleasure; and, by transferring a portion of this superabundant merit to any particular person, for a sum of money, may convey to him either the pardon of his own sins, or a release for any one, in whose happiness he is interested, from the pains of purgatory. Julius II. had bestowed indulgences on all who contributed towards building the church of Saint Peter at Rome; and as Leo was carrying on that magnificent and expensive fabric, his grant was founded on the same pretence." *See Robertson's Hist. of Charles V.* vol. II. p. 106.

granted to Albert, Archbishop of Magdeburg, who employed a Dominican, of the name of John Tetzel, to proclaim in Germany the remission of all sins, past, present, and to come, to those who were rich enough to purchase those famous privileges. Assisted by the Monks of his order, Tetzel executed his commission with more zeal than discretion; though, by disposing of the indulgences at a low price, they carried on a lucrative trade amongst those who possessed more money than understanding. The princes and nobles felt indignant at this method of draining the wealth of their vassals in order to replenish the treasury of an extravagant pontiff. Even the common people were shocked at the behaviour of Tetzel and his associates, who consumed in drunkenness and debauchery those sums which ignorance had appropriated to the purchase of eternal happiness.

An obscure Monk at Wittemberg, disgusted with the pretensions and conduct of Tetzel, formed the resolution of checking his career. MARTIN LUTHER, a name for ever to be revered by every protestant, challenged Tetzel, in ninety-five propositions, to defend himself and his pontifical employers, whom he censured as accomplices in these impositions on the people. Tetzel appeared immediately in the field, and attempted to refute Luther's propositions

in two academical discourses, which he delivered on occasion of his promotion to the degree of doctor in divinity.

Leo X. who at first beheld this controversy with indifference, was at length roused by the Emperor Maximilian I. who informed him what fatal divisions it was likely to produce in Germany. Acting upon this information, he summoned Luther to appear before him at Rome, and there to plead the cause which he had undertaken to support. This summons, the effects of which, had it been complied with, it is not difficult to calculate, was superseded by the cautious policy of Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, who asserted that the cause of Luther belonged to a German tribunal, and ought to be decided by the ecclesiastical laws of the empire. The pontiff, in compliance with the wishes of Frederick, ordered Luther to justify his conduct before Cardinal Cajetan, his legate, at the diet of Augsburg. A more imprudent step could not have been taken by the court of Rome, as Cajetan, being a Dominican, and the friend of Tetzel, was of all others the most unlikely to bring the controversy to a favourable issue.

Luther, however, obedient to the pontiff's summons, repaired to Augsburgh, where he had three interviews with the legate, who assumed so high a

tone, as to produce in the mind and conduct of the reformer, only disgust and indignation. Under the influence of these feelings, Luther departed suddenly from Augsburg, having appealed from the present decisions of the pontiff, to those which he should form when better instructed.

Mortified by the total failure of Cajetan's commission, Leo appointed a new legate. This person was Charles Miltitz, a Saxon knight belonging to his court. Eminent for prudence, penetration, and address, he was admirably qualified for the management of so critical a commission. With the intention of securing the influence of Frederick, Leo despatched Miltitz into Saxony with the golden consecrated *rose*, (the highest mark of distinction which the pontiffs were used to bestow upon their favourite princes,) and instructed him to compose the differences between Luther and Tetzel, and to effect a reconciliation between him and the court of Rome. The legate, in his first conference with Luther, succeeded so far as to persuade him to write a submissive letter to Leo, in which he promised to observe a profound silence with reference to the subjects in debate, on the condition that the same obligation should be imposed upon his adversaries. A second conference took place in the castle of Liebenwerd, and a third the year following, at

Litchtenberg. From the moderation which prevailed on these occasions, great hopes were entertained of an amicable adjustment of the differences in discussion. But the imprudent arrogance of the court of Rome blasted these fair blossoms, and renewed the controversy with increased asperity.

A public dispute, which took place at this time between Eckius, a zealous champion in the papal cause, and Carlostadt, a convert to the sentiments of Luther, proved eminently serviceable. The controversy itself turned upon the powers and freedom of the human will; and was followed by another between Luther and Eckius, concerning the authority and supremacy of the Roman pontiff. One of the effects (not unfrequently the result of disputation) was an increase of bitterness on the part of Eckius, who from that period meditated the destruction of Luther.

Among the spectators of this ecclesiastical combat, was Philip Melancthon, professor of Greek at Wittemberg, an intimate friend of Luther, as well as a promoter of his views. To the learning and influence of Melancthon, the Reformation must be allowed to be considerably indebted; though it is equally certain that the natural timidity of his disposition, and his excessive veneration for the great, prevented his improving that influence to its proper extent.

While the cause of Anti-christ was thus visibly on the decline in Germany, it received a mortal wound in Switzerland from Ulrich Zuingle, a canon of Zurich, a man who united, with an extensive fund of learning, a spirit truly heroic. Disgusted by the sale of indulgences, entrusted to the ministry of an Italian Monk, whose name was Samson, he commenced a resolute opposition against him, attended with considerable success. The effect of his exertions was so great as to discredit the Pope's supremacy throughout the greater part of Switzerland.

The cause of the Reformation was still farther promoted by an imprudent step which Leo X. at the instigation of the Dominicans, was induced to take. Overcome by their importunity, he issued out a bull against Luther, dated the 15th of June, 1520, in which forty-one pretended heresies, extracted from his writings, were solemnly condemned; and he was required within sixty days to retract his errors, and to solicit mercy from the offended pontiff, on pain of excommunication.

Foreseeing the inevitable effect of this rash measure, Luther prudently withdrew from the communion of the church which he had long considered as essentially corrupt and erroneous, and, by putting the church of Rome out of *his* communion, de-

prived the pontiff's subsequent excommunication of all force and meaning. In the presence of an immense multitude of people of all ranks, he committed to the flames both the bull that had been issued against him, and the decretals and canons relating to the Pope's absolute jurisdiction. In about a month after this magnanimous step had been taken by the Saxon reformer, a second bull was issued out against him, by which he was expelled from the communion of the church, for having insulted the majesty of the Roman pontiff.* The death of Maximilian I. making way for his grandson Charles V. to succeed him in the empire, Leo X. urged upon him the necessity of punishing Luther in the most exemplary manner, while Frederick the Wise employed his influence with Charles to shield him against the thunder of the Vatican. Indebted to the exertions of Frederick for his elevation to the empire, Charles had gratitude enough to satisfy the elector's demands. He resolved, therefore, that Luther should appear before a diet to be assembled at Worms, in order to secure him a public hearing, before any urgent steps were taken against him. The conduct of Luther before this assembly was marked with equal modesty and firm-

* See Mosheim's Eccl. Hist. Cent. xvi. sect. i. p. 322.

ness. On his return from Worms, he was surprised by some emissaries of the elector, disguised in masks, who conveyed him to the castle of Wartenburg, where he employed his involuntary leisure in composing works, which contributed greatly to the success of the cause in which he had embarked.

The death of Leo occurring at this period, he was succeeded in the pontificate by Adrian VI. a native of Utrecht. Adrian, it appears, was possessed of more honesty than was consistent with the policy of that age; and was therefore warmly censured for his concessions on the subject of the corruptions of the church. Dying, however, in the course of a year, he was succeeded by Clement VII. a man as remarkable for a reserved character as Adrian had been for his frankness. The success of Luther, rapidly progressive, excited the attention of almost every nation, while it prompted to that freedom of investigation, which is the best friend of truth. The divisions which, however, crept in among the reformers on the subject of the *manner* in which the body and blood of Christ were present in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, by diverting their energy from their original object, proved productive of the most unfavourable effects.

Finding that Luther gained continual and important accessions of strength, the Papists turned

their attention to a species of warfare, upon which they placed more dependance than upon that of *argument;* and intimated their intention of making war upon the Lutheran party. But this malicious purpose was providentially defeated by the existing troubles of Europe. The results of the diet assembled at Spire, proved much more favourable to the friends of the Reformation; the German princes refusing to execute the sentence that had been pronounced at Worms against Luther and his followers.

But the advantages resulting from the first diet of Spire were very limited in their duration, as, in a new diet assembled in the year 1529, in the same place, every change in the doctrine, discipline, or worship of the church of Rome, was declared unlawful, until a general council should be assembled for the purpose of adjusting the disputed points. This decree being considered intolerable by the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and the other members of the diet who favoured the Reformation, they entered a solemn *protest* against it on the 19th of April, and appealed to a future council. From this circumstance arose the denomination of PROTESTANTS, which has ever since been given to those who renounce the communion of the church of Rome.

An attempt to bring to a termination the disputes

which had produced such divisions in the empire, was now made by Charles, who was returning to Germany with the intention of being present at the approaching diet at Augsburg. As the emperor remained hitherto uninformed with reference to the peculiar sentiments of the reformers, the Elector of Saxony ordered Luther and his friends to commit to writing the principal articles of their religious system, and the grounds of their dissent from the church of Rome. Luther, therefore, delivered to the Elector of Torgaw seventeen articles, which were afterwards called the *Articles of Torgaw*. These articles were extended by Melancthon in a manner which illustrated the elegance and perspicuity of his mind; and afterwards formed the Confession of Augsburg.

The alarm which Clement VII. expressed with reference to the spread of the Lutheran tenets, was by no means unfounded, as some of the most considerable provinces in Europe had cast off the Roman yoke. Soon after Luther's rupture with Rome, one of his disciples, whose name was Olaus Petri, proclaimed religious liberty in Sweden. The exertions of this missionary were powerfully seconded by Gustavus Vasa Eriscon, a prince of extraordinary public spirit. In the year 1527, the reformed religion obtained at once a complete triumph, and a permanent establishment.

Denmark, also, received the light of the Reformation so early as the year 1521. For this advantage it appears to have been indebted to Christian, or Christiern II. who expressed an earnest desire to have his subjects instructed in the principles of Luther. His sole object, however, in favouring the principles of the Reformation, was the gratification of his ambition in destroying the influence of Rome in his dominions, and rendering himself supreme in church and state. Upon the deposition of Christiern, the cause of the Reformation found a more enlightened friend in the person of his uncle Frederick, Duke of Holstein and Sleswick, who was placed on the throne of Denmark. The glorious work of effectually destroying superstition, was however reserved for Christiern III. a prince of distinguished piety and prudence.

In the kingdom of France, the Reformation dawned auspiciously under the patronage of Margaret, Queen of Navarre, sister to Francis I. the formidable rival of Charles V. The situation of the friends of the Reformation was, however, extremely precarious: sometimes reposing in the shade of royal protection, at others exposed to the scorching rays of persecution, they had nothing to confide in but their principles, which, however, yielded them solace and support.

About this time the famous CALVIN, whose life will form the principal subject of the following pages, began to excite the attention of the public, and to attract the favourable notice of the Queen of Navarre. His zeal exposed him to various perils, from which he was rescued by the good offices of his illustrious friend, the Queen of Navarre. With the intention of digesting and elucidating the principles of the friends of the Reformation, he published his *Christian Institutions*, to which he prefixed that famous dedication to Francis I. the object of which was to soften the rigour of that prince against his Protestant subjects.

Charles V. having arrived at Augsburg on the 15th of June, 1530, the diet was opened with great solemnity on the 20th day of the same month. On the 25th of June, Christian Bayer, Chancellor of Saxony, read, in presence of the emperor and the princes assembled, the celebrated Confession, which has since been distinguished by the denomination of the *Augsburg Confession*. The creatures of the Roman pontiff, who were present, employed John Faber, afterwards Bishop of Vienne, to compose a refutation of the Confession. The arguments employed by Faber were soon refuted in the most satisfactory manner by Melancthon, who afterwards extended his answer, and in the year 1531, pub-

lished it under the title of *A Defence of the Confession of Augsburg*.

A severe decree being issued out against the Protestants on the 19th day of November, by the express order of the emperor, the Elector of Saxony and the confederate princes formed an alliance at Smalcald, for the purpose of defending themselves vigorously against the encroachments of Rome. Into this confederacy they invited the kings of England, France, and Denmark, with several other states and republics.

Two remarkable events, which occurred at this period, produced respectively the most important results, with reference to the Reformation. In the year 1533, a certain number of Anabaptists settled at Munster, a city in Westphalia, where, under the pretext of being invested with a divine commission, they attempted to lay the foundations of a new government, or a holy and spiritual empire. Having succeeded in overturning all the political institutions in Munster, they proceeded to erect a new republic, the administration of which they committed to John Bockholt, a tailor, and a native of Leyden. Their triumph, like that of the wicked in general, was short: for in the year 1535, the city was besieged and taken by the Bishop of Munster; when this fanatical king, and his associates, were put to death in

the most ignominious manner. While it is impossible to contemplate the conduct of these fanatics, without feeling the glow of indignation, it is important to guard against a disposition to transfer our disgust to those who are distinguished by the same denomination in the present day. Justice, however, requires us to confess, that they are as far removed from every thing offensive in the conduct of the fanatics of Munster, as they are agreed with them on the article of baptism. It would indeed be equally just to reproach the present Americans, on the ground of the character and circumstances of their remote ancestors.

The cause of the Reformation received, upon the whole, a considerable accession of strength from the ambiguous support of Henry VIII. King of England, who was the principal agent in delivering his dominions from papal jurisdiction. Professing to entertain some scruples on the subject of his marriage with Catharine of Arragon, aunt to Charles V. and being really enamoured of an illustrious virgin whose name was Anna Boleyn, he earnestly sought a divorce from the former, in order to render legitimate his passion for the latter. With this view he applied to Clement VII. alleging conscientious scruples as the ground of his wish to obtain a divorce. Clement, perplexed be-

tween the fear of offending the emperor by conforming to Henry's wishes, and the dread of incurring that monarch's displeasure by refusing to comply with them, had recourse to procrastinating evasions, as the only method of conduct which he could pursue with safety. Tired with the tardy measures of the Roman pontiff, Henry had recourse to a measure suggested by the famous Thomas Cranmer, a secret friend of Luther and his cause, who was afterwards raised to the See of Canterbury. The advice of Cranmer was, to demand the opinions of the most learned universities in Europe, on the subject of Henry's scruples. The greatest part of the universities declared the marriage with a brother's widow unlawful. Catharine was divorced, and Anna conducted to the royal bed. Henry, renouncing the jurisdiction of the court of Rome, was declared by the parliament and people, *Supreme Head, on earth, of the Church of England;* and the power and authority of the Pope were completely overturned. It deserves, however, to be carefully considered, that while Henry withdrew himself from the tyranny of Rome, he considered the title of *Head of the English Church* as vesting virtually in himself the enormous power which had been previously exercised by the Roman pontiffs. Hence, during the reign of this

despot, the face of religion was ever changing, in comformity to the caprice of its new chief. The influence of Cranmer, the favourite of Henry, served, however, to counteract the vehemence of this inconstant monarch, and to dispel the mists of ignorance.

On the death of Henry, which took place in the year 1547, he was succeeded by Edward VI. a prince of elevated genius and exemplary piety. Deeply interested in the prosperity of the Reformation, he addressed a particular invitation to Martin Bucer, and to Paul Fagius, that, under the auspices of their learning and piety, his subjects might be confirmed in the pure truths of Christianity. His reign was, however, too short to accomplish his generous purposes. In the year 1553, he was removed from his affectionate subjects, and succeeded by his sister Mary, a furious abettor of the papacy. Among other victims, the learned and pious Cranmer was sacrificed to her cruelty. A stop was, however, put to these dreadful cruelties by her death, in the year 1558; and being succeeded by Elizabeth, the protestant cause revived and flourished. During her reign, that form of religious doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline, which still subsists in England, was established as the national religion.

In Scotland the seeds of the Reformation were early sown by several noblemen of that nation, who had resided in Germany during Luther's disputes with the court of Rome. But the most distinguished opposer of the papal jurisdiction, was John Knox, a disciple of Calvin, whose talents and fortitude qualified him eminently for the labours and dangers of a reformer. This determined character quitted Geneva for Scotland, in the year 1559; and, by means of preaching and private exhortations, imbued the minds of his countrymen with so entire a disgust for the superstitions of Rome, as to induce them to aim at nothing less than the extirpation of Popery in all its forms. The form of worship and discipline which had been established at Geneva, by the ministry of Calvin, was universally adopted, and continues to the present day, notwithstanding many efforts to introduce into that kingdom the episcopal hierarchy of the church of England.

In Ireland the cause of the Reformation was greatly promoted by George Brown, a native of England, and a Monk of the Augustin order, who was created Archbishop of Dublin, in the year 1535. Encouraged by the conduct of Henry VIII. he purged the churches of his diocess from various superstitions, and, by his influence, caused the king's supremacy to be acknowledged in that nation.

In the Belgic provinces, the yoke of Rome was shaken off with an impetuosity that was perhaps rather excessive. To the heroic conduct of William of Nassau, seconded by the exertions of England and France, this state owed its deliverance from the Spanish yoke.

The eyes of several persons in Spain were opened to the truth, not merely by the controversies between Luther and the court of Rome; but by means also of those very divines who had been selected by Charles V. to combat the sentiments of the Reformers. These Spanish doctors, instead of refuting, having imbibed the opinions of Luther, propagated them on their return home.

The spirit and conduct of the reformers having been censured by an elegant historian as tinctured with enthusiasm, the judicious translator of Mosheim has been at the pains to repel the accusation, in an appendix, in which he triumphantly proves, that the reformers possessed precisely that spirit which was necessary to the successful prosecution of their object, while it was at the same time at the farthest possible remove from enthusiasm. Having instanced, in the person of several of the reformers, the truth of his assertion, he concludes by a description of the manner in which Calvin promoted the noble cause which he had espoused.

"As to Calvin, every one," observes this writer, "who has any acquaintance with history, knows how he set out in promoting the Reformation. It was by a work composed with a classic elegance of style, and which, though tinctured with the scholastic theology of the times, breathes an uncommon spirit of good sense and moderation. This work was *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, in which the learned writer shews, that the doctrine of the reformers was founded in scripture and reason. Nay, one of the designs of this book was to shew, that the reformers ought not to be confounded with certain *fanatics*, who, about the time of the Reformation, sprung from the bosom of the church of Rome, and excited tumults and commotions in several places. The French monarch, Francis I. to cover with a specious pretext his barbarous persecution of the friends of the Reformation, and to prevent the resentment of the Protestants in Germany, with whom it was his interest to be on good terms, alleged, that his severity fell *only* upon a sect of enthusiasts, who, under the title of *Anabaptists*, substituted their visions in the place of the doctrines and declarations of the Holy Scriptures. To vindicate the reformers from this reproach, Calvin wrote the book now under consideration; and though the theology that reigns in it be

chargeable with some defects, yet it is as remote from the spirit and complexion of fanaticism, as any thing can be. Nor indeed is this spirit visible in any of the writings of Calvin that I have perused. His Commentary upon the Old and New Testament is a production that will always be esteemed, on account of its elegant simplicity, and the evident marks it bears of an unprejudiced and impartial inquiry into the plain sense of the Sacred Writings, and of sagacity and penetration in the investigation of it."

Memoirs

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

JOHN CALVIN.

Memoirs

OF THE

LIFE OF CALVIN.

Introductory.—*Account of Geneva.*

"SO strong and prevalent is the desire of liberty, and so deeply is the love of it implanted in every bosom, that we with pleasure call off our attention from monarchies and empires raised by tyranny, to fix it on little states where freedom reigns. Many a simple flower, when its qualities are understood, is as worthy our notice as the proud cedar, at whose foot it blossoms. It is not the size of objects alone which claims our admiration, but rather some peculiar beauty and contrivance that we discover in them.

"Hence it is that there is no government in the world which can challenge greater respect than that of Geneva. It is a place which, for many years, hath been much resorted to by such of our young countrymen whose fortunes indulge them in that part of education which we call travelling; of whom not a few make a considerable stay here, and find opportunities of being well assisted in

whatever studies they are desirous to pursue. As it lies in one of the principal passages into Italy, it hath been mentioned by several Voyage writers; but as none have entered into a detail of its government and laws, I flatter myself that such a work may not be unacceptable, and that the reader will not be displeased to know somewhat of a republic, founded in wisdom and virtue. He will not find here the ambition of one, making thousands wretched, and augmenting the miseries of life. He will not here meet legions of armed men rushing abroad into the world, and with the thunders of war, disturbing the peace of mankind; but, on the contrary, he will be conveyed to the gentler scenes of academic silence, where philosophy is more studied than the sword. He will see a people happy and free, yet who have defended themselves with bravery on every occasion, against the various encroachments of tyranny and oppression,—a people who make temperance the guardian of their healths, and who bar up every avenue to the blandishments of luxury. He will remark the care that is taken by the state, to promote religion and virtue; to infuse into all its subjects such a tincture of learning as is suitable to their different stations; and to form the character of a good citizen upon that of a good Christian. He will observe by what laws the dignity of the magistrate and the liberties of each individual are maintained; and, in fine, by what regulations (which is an object not unworthy our curiosity) five and twenty thousand people preserve

the utmost harmony within their walls, and live together like one great family.

" While the wisdom of man hath rendered this city a mild and amiable dwelling, the hand of Nature hath also co-operated, and marked the scene she hath spread around it, as one of her happiest labours. It is situated on a most beautiful spot, at the head of the Leman Lake, acknowledged the largest and finest in Europe. This noble piece of water is about sixty English miles in length, and in its broadest part about twelve, though much narrower towards the two extremities of it. It is of a remarkable blue transparent colour; is well stocked with fish, and particularly famous for its trout, which are often found of a prodigious size. The Rhone rolls into it at the opposite end, from the country called Le Vallais, and having blended its waters with those of the Lake, separates itself in two rapid streams, which run through part of Geneva, forming a little island in the town, and immediately re-uniting, continue their course into France. It is bordered, on the side of Switzerland, by the Pais du Vaud, a tract of country formerly conquered from the Dukes of Savoy by the canton of Bern; and which may truly be esteemed one of the gayest and most delicious spots that can be beheld; being covered with towns, country houses, woods, vineyards, and gardens, and the view terminated by that range of hills known under the general name of Mount Jura. The Savoy side,

though less fertile, is more woody, and makes a pleasing contrast; for the high precipices, and vast mountains, that bound the sight all round, and rise behind one another in so many wild and fantastic forms; some totally bleak and barren, others verdant, others covered with perpetual snows, and seen from many leagues distance, fill the mind with an agreeable astonishment, and produce some of the most noble and stupendous scenes that can be imagined; scenes capable of furnishing a thousand new ideas to the fancy of the Poet and the Painter.

"Geneva is a city of great antiquity, being mentioned frequently by Cæsar, in his Commentaries, by the same name it now bears.

"In 1534, and 1535, it formed itself into a Republic, and by degrees obtained that form of government which exists to this day.

"The sovereign power is lodged in Three Councils; namely,

"*The General Council;*
"*The Council of Two Hundred; and*
"*The Council of Twenty-five.*

"The General Council is composed of such citizens and burgesses as have attained the age of twenty-five years. Their numbers usually amount to 1500, not including those who are in foreign countries. The law orders the Councils of Twenty-five, and Two Hundred, to summon the General Council twice a year for the election of magis-

trates; and if affairs of consequence demand a more frequent meeting, they have a right to call them as often as shall be necessary.

"The attributes of this Council are,

1. The power of making laws.
2. The power of electing the principal magistrates.
3. The power of making alliances, of approving, or rejecting what is proposed in relation to exchanges or alienations of lands belonging to the state, and of borrowing money.
4. The power of war and peace.
5. The power of raising subsidies.
6. The power of consenting to, or disapproving what is proposed with regard to fortifications.

"The Council of Two Hundred is composed of two hundred and fifty citizens and burgesses, who fill up this body as often as there are fifty vacancies. The members must be thirty years of age complete; they have their seats for life, except they become bankrupts, or are degraded by the censure which is annually made.

"The attributes of this Council are,

1. To be the supreme court of justice.
2. To have the power of pardoning.
3. To dispose of all important charges, and to elect the Council of Twenty-five.
4. To deliberate on what is to be proposed in the General Assembly.
5. To be consulted on all affairs of importance.

"The Council of Twenty-five, or Little Council, must be chosen out of such of the citizens as are members of the Council of Two Hundred: they continue for life, unless in the before-mentioned cases of insolvency or degradation.

"The attributes of this Council are,

1. The executive power of all that regards the law of nations.
2. The cognizance of all inferior affairs, which are not of consequence sufficient to demand a convocation of the Council of Two Hundred.
3. The judging of all criminal causes without the power of pardoning, which is lodged in the Council of Two Hundred.
4. The judging of civil causes, though the parties have a right of appeal to the Council of Two Hundred, whenever it is a matter of above twenty or twenty-five pounds value, or in other respects of importance.
5. The naming to all little employments.
6. The right of having the principal magistrates chosen out of its own body.
7. The power of summoning the Council of Two Hundred, as often as it thinks proper.
8. The administration of the finances.
9. The creation of burgesses.

Of the Church of Geneva.

"It is well known that Calvin was its founder, who had a great share in forming its political, as well as spiritual legislation: and it is no wonder that the people rejected episcopacy, as they shook off the fetters of popery in opposition to their bishop.

"The government of the church is *democratical*, under the superintendance of a chief, styled the *Moderator*, who is changed every week without election; he who follows him in order among the pastors, succeeding *ipso jure*.

"The pastors have a fixed salary paid out of the public stock; those in the city not receiving more than sixty pounds sterling *per annum*, and those in the country about half that sum. They have their particular parishes assigned them.

"Their service is decent, but devoid of form; their prayers are few, and their liturgy short. They never kneel nor bow in church; and, except during prayers, wear their hats, the minister himself preaching covered.

"To us in England, who are so much accustomed to hear of sinecures and pluralities, and to see clergymen in possession of large incomes, and at the same time so little conscientious of their great trust, as to abandon the instruction of their parishes to the mercy of some indigent curate; it must, without doubt, seem extremely surprising, that the ministers of Geneva should, with so small salaries,

religiously discharge their duty. It will thence be easily conceived, that in becoming ecclesiastics, they are not greatly influenced by pecuniary advantages. They are generally indeed men, whose circumstances and leisure have afforded them a learned education, and whose honour and virtue prompt them to become serviceable to their country. Hence it is, that the word of God is preached with the utmost decency and propriety, and the clergy are held in such high esteem, as to have, on all public occasions, the same rank as the members of the Little Council.

Of the Consistory.

" The Consistory is an ecclesiastical court, composed of all the pastors of the republic, and twelve laymen; two of whom are members of the Little Council; a third is one of the auditeurs; and the nine others are taken from the Council of Two Hundred. The pastors are perpetual members of this court, but the laymen are only chosen for six years.

" They assemble every Thursday, and oftener when occasion requires it.

" They have cognizance of all public scandals, and proceed on the report which the pastor makes, in whose division such offence is committed. They inflict ecclesiastical penalties, such as censures, and excommunications for a certain time; and, for civil punishment, are obliged to send the delinquents to the Council of Twenty-five. This court also

gives its opinion in matrimonial cases, which are first presented here, and afterwards carried before the Little Council.

"It hath not the least coercive power; for the officers, who are members of it, sit there not as magistrates, but as a part of a religious society.—If obedience is refused, either to its citation or sentence, it addresses itself for relief to the Little Council.

"This tribunal enjoys the privilege, common to all the citizens, of presenting remonstrances to the Council of Twenty-five, which is done by sending deputies, who demand audience of the Council. The body ecclesiastical, as well as the body politic, censures its members.

"One cannot, I think, without some degree of pleasure and satisfaction, behold a commonwealth, the seat of freedom and letters, strenuous in the cause of independency, and watching, with a parental care, over the happiness of its subjects. Nor can we admire it without at the same time earnestly wishing, that while Heaven continues to give the Genevois a sufficient portion of virtue to maintain their liberties, it may turn the ambition of neighbouring princes (for too apt is power to leap over the bounds of justice) from wantonly disturbing their tranquillity, or offering their rights any barbarous insult."*

* See a short account of the Ancient History, Present Government, and Laws of the Republic of Geneva, by *George Keate, Esq.* 1761.

CHAP. I.

Birth and Education of Calvin—His Application to the Study of the Law—Reasons for quitting that Profession—Publication of his Institutes—Journey to Italy.

JOHN CALVIN,* the celebrated Reformer, was born at Noyon, a town in Picardy, on the 10th of July, 1509. Undistinguished by the splendour of family consideration, it was reserved for him to give dignity and perpetuity to a name, which had hitherto occupied an humble but respectable rank

* The circumstance of a trifling alteration in the name of our reformer, which it appears was *Cauwin*, having been maliciously perverted by some of his enemies, we shall present our readers with a justification of it in the words of the celebrated Mr. Drelincourt. "In reality," saith he, "the change of a letter in Calvin's name is very inconsiderable, or rather, signifies nothing at all; for being to turn *Cauvin* into Latin, if one would give it an air and termination suitable to the genius of the language, how can one turn it otherwise than by *Calvinus?* for as all good authors call that in Latin, *Calvus*, which the Picards call *Cauve*, and the Frenchmen *Chauve*, so, instead of *Cauvin* in Picard, and *Chauvin* in French, the Latin must have it *Calvinus*. Now this godly man's first work being written in Latin, and he thereby known by the name of *Calvinus*, if after that, when he wrote in French, he had used any other name than that of *Calvin*, the work might have been taken for another man's, to the no small damage of the reader and printer."—*Defense de Calvin, par Drelincourt*, p. 202.

in society. His father, whose name was Gerard, a sensible and prudent man, had gained the esteem and friendship of all the neighbouring gentlemen, and particularly of the family of Montmor, a family of the first distinction in Picardy. John Calvin was brought up with the children of this family, and accompanied them to Paris, where he pursued his studies with them under Marturin Cordier, regent of the Collége de la Marche; a man illustrious for his erudition and integrity, who spent his life in tuition at Nevers, at Bourdeaux, at Neuf Chatel, at Lausanne, and at Geneva, where he died in the eighty-fifth year of his age, and in the same year as Calvin.

On quitting the Collége de la Marche, Calvin removed to that of Montaign, the tutor of which was a learned Spaniard. Here he advanced so rapidly in his studies, that he soon entered upon philosophy. But as he had from his youth discovered considerable piety, and an extreme horror at vice, frequently censuring the excesses of his companions, Gerard thought that he should be following the inclinations of his son, in consecrating him to theology. He therefore procured for him, in the year 1529, a benefice in the cathedral church at Noyon, and the rectory of Point L'Eveque, where he was born. Here Calvin, though unordained, preached frequently.

How mysterious are the ways of Providence! How little propable did it appear, from Calvin's present situation and prospects (a member and a

minister of the church of Rome), that he should be an instrument appointed to overthrow that pile of corruptions! Two reasons, however, concurred in influencing our reformer's future character and conduct; they were dissimilar indeed in their nature, but tended equally to one point—that of inducing him to quit his ministry in the church of Rome. His father resolved to make him study the law, convinced that it was the most certain method of acquiring riches and honour. Calvin having been instructed in the true religion by one of his relations, named Pierre Robert Olivetan;* and having carefully perused the Scriptures, began to be disgusted with the doctrines of the church of Rome, and resolved to renounce her communion. Thus, either to comply with his father's wishes, or his own inclinations, he quitted the study of theology, for that of the law, and removed to Orleans, where he made such progress in that science, under Pierre de l'Etoile,† the most celebrated of all the French civilians, that he was considered rather a master than a scholar. In the absence of the professors, he frequently supplied their place, and acquired so much esteem in the university, that they offered to present him with a doctor's degree.

This period of the life of Calvin illustrates, stri-

* Author of a French translation of the Bible, printed at Neuf Chatel.

† Pierre de l'Etoile was afterwards president of the parliament of Paris, and was called in Latin, *Petrus Stella.*

kingly, the importance of early habits of application, as laying the foundation for future eminence and usefulness. Without entering upon the unprofitable question, whether genius be intuitive or acquired, it will certainly be more useful to remember, that all the illustrious instances of superior powers, have been as remarkable for early industry and extensive acquirements, as they were eminent for distinguished rank in the literary world. Milton, Locke, Sir Isaac Newton, Boyle, Bacon, Addison, and Johnson, are characters highly illustrative of this remark. What they would have been, independently of their severe application, and rich acquirements, we are not capable of conceiving; but that they would have occupied a much lower station in the republic of letters, is absolutely certain. The importance of literature to the cause of Christianity is, perhaps, greater than some of its sincerest friends are willing to admit.* It is true, indeed, that in the first promulgation of the gospel, it triumphed gloriously over the learning and the prejudices of its opposers; but it will be allowed, that it was then accompanied with influ-

* "All persons, in every age and nation, competent to read the best classics with facility and intelligence, have unanimously considered an acquaintance with them as highly conducive, if not absolutely necessary, to the formation of a just taste and habit in composition, to the complete knowledge of the human character, to the most advantageous study of the Holy Scriptures, and to the due appreciation of the glorious gospel. The apostate empe-

ences which have since been withdrawn; and that in many subsequent periods, it has been illustrated and enforced by the genius and eloquence of many of its abettors. Nor is learning less indebted to pure Christianity; this might easily be shewn by a comparative view of its state before and after the Reformation, upon which the learning and piety of Calvin had evidently so happy and decided an influence.

In the midst of his various employments, our reformer was a diligent student of the Holy Scriptures, and obtained so clear an insight into their meaning, that many persons, whom God had inspired with a desire to be instructed in the true religion, applied to him for information, and were equally impressed with his zeal and his knowledge. He was at this time so diligent a student, that after having supped lightly, he continued reading until midnight, and in the morning was employed while in bed, in reviewing what he had read the night before. There is no doubt but that these late studies contributed to his extensive erudition, and his remarkable memory; but they also materially injured

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ror, that bitter and subtle enemy of our faith, calculated judiciously on the tendency of his machinations, when he forbade the Christians to teach in their schools, the heathen poets, moralists, and historians. It would be well if all modern friends of the gospel were as perspicacious as Julian was, in discerning the connection of ancient learning and the great cause of revealed truth."—*Vide Eclectic Review for March* 1807.

his health, and brought on that weakness of stomach with which he was afflicted all his life, and which at length shortened his days.

André Alciat, one of the most celebrated civilians of his age, having rendered famous l'Academie de Bourges, Calvin wished to attend his lectures. During his residence there, he formed an intimate friendship with Melchior Wolmar, professor of Greek; a man of considerable merit, and an excellent tutor; who taught Calvin Greek, an obligation which he acknowledged, by dedicating to him his Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.

With his laborious studies he associated an incessant perusal of the Scriptures, and sometimes preached in a small town in Berri, named Ligueres, with the consent, and frequently before, the seigneur of that department.

His father dying while he was at Bourges, he was obliged to abandon the study of the law, and to return to Noyon. At Paris, which he visited shortly afterwards, he published his Commentary on Seneca's Book on Clemency, an author, the purity of whose sentiments were in perfect unison with the morals of Calvin; and whom he always read with pleasure. He was then only twenty-four years of age; but, notwithstanding his youth, he became soon known and esteemed by those who were devoted to true religion. Amongst the persons with whom he formed an acquaintance at this period, was a merchant, who was afterwards burned

for his attachment to the gospel, named Estienne de la Forge, of whom he frequently spoke with commendation. Of this person he makes mention in his fourth chapter of the book which he wrote against the libertines.

During his residence at Paris, renouncing the pursuit of all other sciences, he consecrated himself to theology and to God; to the inexpressible satisfaction of the reformed, who secretly held their assemblies there.

Nicholas Cop, rector of l'Academie de Paris,* having on a public occasion spoken freely against public errors in religion, and given offence to the parliament, was summoned to appear at court. On his journey he was informed that he would be imprisoned. He consequently returned immediately, and quitting the kingdom, retired to Basil.

Calvin, being an intimate friend of Cop, was obliged also to take flight. After his departure, Marin, the bailiff, one of the most cruel persecutors, went to his room in the Collége de Fortret, intending to take him prisoner; but not finding him, seized his papers and books, amongst which were found several letters from his friends, which exposed them to extreme danger; so great was their aversion to the Romish church. But the Queen of Navarre, a princess of uncommon merit, having sent for Calvin, treated him with great respect, list-

* Son of William Cop, physician to the king, born at Basil.

ened to him with pleasure, and made use of her influence with the king, Francis I. her brother, to appease the tempest which had arisen against the reformed.

What an apparent ignorance of the genius of Christianity, and of human nature, have persecutors invariably discovered! Taking our estimate of Christianity from their exhibition of it, we should be ready to suppose, that its predominant quality was hatred, and its ultimate object, extermination. How ignorant of human nature must they be, who are not instructed in this most obvious truth, that opposition only strengthens opinions, and confirms prejudices; that it is equally incapable of subduing truth, and of suppressing error!

Having quitted Paris, Calvin retired to Xaintonge, where, at the request of a friend, he composed some formularies of sermons and Christian exhortations, which he induced the rectors to use as homilies, in order to excite the people to pursue their inquiries into the truth. About this time he took a journey to Nerac, to visit Jacques Le Fevre d'Estaples, who had been tutor to the children of Francis I. and who, to avoid the persecutions of the Sorbonne, had retired to that town under the protection of the Queen of Navarre. The good old man rejoiced to see him, and predicted that Calvin would one day be a powerful instrument of establishing the true religion in France.

He did not, however, remain long at Nerac, but went from thence to Paris. Yet, as he had many

enemies there, who had meditated his destruction, he was obliged to remain concealed. The providence of God appears, however, to have conducted him to Paris at this time. For Michael Servetus began about this period to broach his blasphemies against the Holy Trinity; and as he appeared to desire an interview with Calvin, the latter attended at the time and place appointed, though at the risk of life. But he waited for him in vain; Servetus had not sufficient courage to meet him.

The following year was disgraced by many cruelties inflicted upon several pious characters. Gerard Rufi, Docteur de Sorbonne, and Coraud, a Monk of the order of St. Austin, who, under the patronage of the Queen of Navarre, had many years laboured with considerable success to establish the knowledge of the truth in Paris, were torn from their pulpits, and dragged to prison. The king, Francis I. being influenced by the Catholics, was so highly incensed by some writings which had been published against the Mass, and which had even been posted up on the door of the Louvre, that after a procession and public prayers, at which he assisted with his three sons, bareheaded, carrying a torch in his hand, in expiation of this crime; he commanded, that in the middle of the four most frequented parts of the city, eight of the reformed should be burned alive; and swore that he would not spare his own children, should they be infected with that execrable heresy.

What a disgusting picture of bigotry and fanati-

cism are we here presented with! and how strikingly does it prove the folly of so identifying a national religion with Christianity, as to constitute a separation from its pale, the proof of heresy! In this view, how much more detestable is the Papal than the Pagan persecution! With respect to the *Pagan religion*, the first Christians were innovators, as it regarded the very substance and essence of their mythology and worship. They not only declared their worship to be superstitious, but denounced their belief as absurd, and their morality as corrupt. The Protestants, on the other hand, innovated chiefly in the circumstantials of religion. For though no intelligent Protestant will allow the church of Rome to be a true church of Christ, every candid Protestant will admit, that in her fundamental articles she recognizes the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity. The plain language of the Papal persecution, therefore, holds out the absurd idea, that it is more important to be agreed in the circumstantials than in the fundamentals of religion; and that uniformity of opinion is of more consequence when it respects the drapery of her disciples, than their character.

Considering the deplorable state to which his brethren were reduced, Calvin, after having printed, at Orleans, an excellent work entitled *La Psychopannychie*, which he composed against those who believed that the souls of the just, separated from their bodies, sleep until the resurrection, resolved to quit the kingdom.

Accompanied by the young man with whom he resided at Xaintonge, he proceeded to Basil by the way of Lorraine. Near Metz, a serious calamity befel him. Being plundered by a servant who fled with one of the horses, he must have been reduced to considerable difficulty, had not the other servant providentially had ten crowns, which defrayed their expenses to Strasbourg, from whence they proceeded comfortably to Basil. There he formed a close friendship with Simon Grinée, and with Walfang Capito, and applied himself to the study of the Hebrew language.

Though he wished at this time to remain in obscurity, as appears by a letter written to him by Bucer, he was, notwithstanding, constrained to publish his Christian Institutes, to serve as an apology for his persecuted brethren. For as Francis I. was desirous of the friendship of the Protestant princes of Germany, and knew that they would disapprove of the murder of his Protestant subjects, he affirmed that he had only put to death the Anabaptists, who, far from making the word of God the rule of their faith, gave themselves up to their disordered imaginations, professing a contempt for magistrates, and sovereign authorities.

Calvin, who could not bear to see the true religion thus calumniated, thought it necessary to publish his Institutes, which he dedicated to Francis I. addressing him in such an admirable manner, that, if that prince could have been persuaded to peruse it, the church of Rome might then have re-

ceived a mortal wound.* For the king differed in many respects from those who succeeded him; his taste and his judgment were exquisite; he loved learning and literary men; nor did his inclination lead him to hate persons of the reformed religion.

Whilst Calvin was finishing this work, he learned that Italy cherished in many places ideas favourable to the Reformation; he therefore flew to the celebrated Duchess de Farrare, the daughter of Louis XII. whose genius and accomplishments made her known to all the learned, and towards whom the wisest of the reformers turned with attention, because her sentiments were not very remote from theirs. This princess, who was acquainted with Calvin's merit, received him with distinction, and Calvin confirmed her in her principles. She conceived also for him an esteem which she retained through life, and expressed to him in a great variety of letters. Notwithstanding this protection, the Inquisition, aroused by the name of Calvin, pursued him to the court of the duchess, and obliged him to fly. It was, no doubt, at this time that he arrived at the town of Piedmont, in which he at first preached the Reformation with

* "Which disgrace put upon the true religion, Mr. Calvin not enduring, took occasion from thence to publish that his incomparable book, prefixing a preface to King *Francis*, which surely he never read, or else it would have provoked him to have given a great wound to the *Babylonish* Whore."—*The Marrow of Ecclesiastical History, by Samuel Clark*, 1675.

success, but from whence he was afterwards driven by intolerance. This fact is attested by a pillar of eight feet in height, still existing, erected to immortalize the arrival of Calvin at Aost, and his banishment from thence. *Hanc Calvini fuga erexit anno* MDXLI. *Religionis constantia reparavit anno* MDCCXLI. This monument appears to have been erected in 1541, but the event which it celebrates took place towards the end of 1535, or the beginning of 1536.*

* Histoire Litteraire de Geneve, par J. Senebier.

CHAP. II.

Calvin's Settlement at Geneva — His Banishment — Return to Geneva — Labours — Acquaintance and Public Dispute with Castallio — Letter to Luther — Is accused of teaching False Doctrine — Procures the Release of Ami Perrin — Confutes Bolzec publicly.

ON quitting Italy, Calvin returned to France, with Anthony, his only remaining brother; but on account of the persecutions, which then ran high, he soon resolved to return to Basil or Strasbourg. But the direct road being then impassable on account of the war, he was compelled to go through Geneva. He had then no intention of stopping there; but the event soon made it evident that he had been conducted thither by a secret determination of Providence. This was in the month of August 1536. The reformed religion had been wonderfully established there by Guillaume Farel, and Pierre Viret. Farel had been instructed, not in a convent, as some have supposed, but in the school of Jacques Le Fevre d'Estaples. Calvin, not willing to pass through Geneva without paying his respects to them, made them a visit; on which occasion Farel earnestly entreated him to stop at Geneva, and help him in the labour to which God had

called him. But perceiving that Calvin was not to be prevailed upon, he said, "You have not any other pretext to refuse me, than the attachment which you profess for your studies; but I warn you in the name of Almighty God, that if you do not share with me the holy work in which I am engaged, he will not bless your designs, since you prefer your repose to Jesus Christ." Calvin, subdued by this appeal, submitted to the wish of the seigneurs, and of the Consistory of Geneva; by whose suffrages, and the consent of the people, he was received to the charge of the ministry, in the month of August 1536.

"In the month of September, John Calvin came to Geneva, with his brother Anthony. The excellent works, the various circumstances of the life, the great pains, and unwearied industry of this great man, make up a great part of the ecclesiastical history of Geneva, for near thirty years; having been for so long a blessed instrument in God's hands to maintain that pure Reformation which had been preached by others, but was not yet settled upon a very sure foundation. He gave in a manner to it a new birth, by the good and wise regulation, the church government and discipline established there. Perhaps never a man before him, since the Apostles, that did more good to any church, than he did to this.

"In order to keep up the memory of that great and excellent work of the Reformation, a fine and

devout Latin Inscription was put on the outside wall of the town-house, where it is now to be seen. It is written in golden letters.

"QUUM ANNO 1535
PROFLIGATA
ROMANI ANTICHRISTI
TYRANNIDE,
ABROGATISQUE EJUS SUPERSTITIONIBUS
SACROSANCTA CHRISTI RELIGIO;
HIC IN SUAM PURITATEM,
ECCLESIA
IN MELIOREM ORDINEM
SINGULARI DEI BENEFICIO REPOSITA;
ET SIMUL
PULSIS FUGATISQUE HOSTIBUS,
URBS IPSA IN SUAM LIBERTATEM,
NON SINE INSIGNI MIRACULO
RESTITUTA FUERIT:
SENATUS POPULUSQUE GENEVENSIS
MONUMENTUM HOC PERPETUÆ MEMORIÆ
FIERI,
ATQUE HOC LOCO ERIGI—
CURAVIT;
QUO SUAM ERGA DEUM GRATITUDINEM
AD POSTEROS TESTATAM FACERET."*

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* The Church History of Geneva. By the Rev. Mr. A. Le Mercier, 1732.

This year was remarkable for a close alliance contracted between Bern and Geneva; and for the establishment of religion in Lausanne, after a conference between the Protestants and the Catholics, at which Calvin presided. He was also engaged in a defence of the reformed, who were attacked by the Anabaptists, against whom he employed scripture and argument with so much success, that he expelled that sect entirely from Geneva. In the same year he was obliged to plead his cause at Bern, against Caroly, who had accused him of Arianism.

Geneva was at this time very far from being in a state of tranquillity. The true religion was indeed established, and the faith of the church of Rome was abolished. But many atrocious crimes were still committed, which had long reigned, and which the example of the clergy had contributed to maintain. The principal families were at variance, on the ground of dissensions which had originated during the war of Savoy, and which time had not been able to extinguish. Farel and Calvin, deeply afflicted by these disorders, made a representation to the council, to induce them to attempt the correction of the public morals. They preached with energy against the vices of the times: and as truth always appears severe to those who are conscious of being guilty, the warmth of their zeal was complained of. Coraut was forbidden to preach, and being disobedient to the injunction, was imprisoned.

Farel and Calvin were hated by those who preferred their vices and their pleasures to good order, to the advancement of religion, and to the good of their country; they therefore united their efforts to get rid of those vigilant ministers.

But, besides these divisions, there was another evil which afflicted the church of Geneva. In some regulations respecting ecclesiastical discipline, she was not perfectly agreed with the church of Bern. For the Genevese celebrated the Lord's Supper with leavened bread; and judging that the baptismal fonts were not necessary to the administration of baptism, they had removed them from their places of worship. They had also abolished all their feasts, except Sunday. The church of Geneva having been required, at a Synod held at Lausanne, to re-establish the use of the baptismal fonts, and the feasts which she had abolished, and the ministers of Geneva wishing to be heard before they were condemned, it was resolved that all these differences should be settled in a synod to be held at Zurich.

The syndics, who were at the head of the seditious, profiting by these divisions, assembled the people, when, the majority being under their influence, they procured an order from the council, by which these three faithful ministers were commanded to leave the town in three days. This order being communicated to Calvin,—"Certainly," said he, "if I had served men, I should have been ill recompensed; but, I have served a Master, who,

far from not rewarding his servants, pays them what he does not owe them."

Farel retired to Neuf Chatel, and Calvin to Strasbourg, where Bucer, Capito, and Hedio, engaged the council of that town to appoint him professor of theology, and pastor of a French church, into which he introduced his ecclesiastical discipline.

Not long after this unjust banishment, Calvin extinguished a greater evil, which would probably have been attended with the worst consequences, had not this illustrious exile applied a prompt remedy to it. Jacques Sadolet, Bishop of Carpentras, was a man of considerable eloquence, which he employed only to oppose the truth. His morals being regular, the Pope made him a cardinal, with a view to give a currency to the false doctrine taught in his church. The cardinal, seeing that the people of Geneva were deprived of such excellent pastors, thought this a favourable opportunity to attract them to the Romish religion, with which view he wrote a long letter, wherein he employed all his address and talents to overthrow the reformed religion, and to establish his own. There was at this time no person in the town capable of answering him; and if this letter had been written in French, it is probable that it would have created considerable disturbances amongst a people so much divided and so ill disposed as they were at this time. But Calvin, forgetting all the injuries which he had sustained evinced that the love

which he had professed for that church was not diminished; and answered the Cardinal with so much eloquence and spirit, that he abandoned his project entirely.

This was not, however, the first expression of tenderness which Calvin had shewn for the Genevese; for he discovered the interest which he took in all their afflictions, by addressing to them several letters from Strasbourg, wherein he exhorted them to repentance, to peace, to charity, and to the love of God, teaching them to hope that a bright light would soon dissipate the fatal darkness in which they were enveloped. The event justified the prediction. At this time he republished his Christian Institutes, with many additions, and dedicated them to his intimate friend Simon Grinée; he published also a piece on the Lord's Supper, highly admired by the wisest and the best of men.

He was also useful in reclaiming many Anabaptists who were brought to him from various parts, and amongst others, Paul Volse,* who died a minister of Strasbourg, and Jean Storder Liegeois, whose widow Calvin afterwards married, by the advice of Bucer; she was a person of extraordinary merit.

Such were the occupations of Calvin until the year 1541, when the Emperor Charles V. convoked a diet at Worms, and afterwards at Ratis-

* It was this person to whom Erasmus dedicated his book of the Christian Soldier.

bonne, to settle the differences which had arisen in Germany. Calvin, by desire of the ministers of Strasbourg, assisted at the diet, in which he proved useful to the churches, and particularly to those of France, and highly pleased Philip Melancthon, who always spoke with applause of Calvin, calling him *The Theologian*. He also acquired the esteem of Gaspar Cruciger, minister of Wittemberg, who wished to confer with him in private; and having learned his opinion on the Lord's Supper, declared his entire approbation of it.

The faction which had procured the banishment of Calvin being overthrown, the Genevese were anxious to recall him. In the year 1540, they wrote to him at Strasbourg, to offer him the employment of which they had deprived him; but he replied that he could not now dispose of himself, that he belonged to Strasbourg, and that he wished to be replaced at Geneva by Viret. The council then sent Ami Perrin, one of the elder syndics, to Strasbourg, to entreat the magistrates to restore Calvin to Geneva: being supported by the cantons of Zurich, of Bern, and of Basil, they complied with his request. Calvin was then gone to Worms and to Ratisbonne, whither he had been sent by the German reformers to assist at the assemblies held there, relative to religion, where he learned what was taking place at Geneva; but he still resisted the offers which they made him. At length, solicited afresh by the council and the ministers of that town, encouraged by Bucer, informed that the

council had revoked his banishment on the 1st of May, 1541, and longing to be useful to his enemies, he tore himself from his church at Strasbourg, (who gave him leave of absence for two years,) left Ratisbonne, and set out for Geneva.

Alluding to the return of Calvin to Geneva, the judicious Hooker remarks—"It was not unlikely but that his credit in the world might many ways stand the poor town in great stead; as the truth is, their minister's foreign estimation hath been the best stake in their hedge. But whatever secret respects were likely to move them, for contenting of their minds, Calvin returned, as he had been another Tully, to his own home."

Upon his arrival he was congratulated by the acclamations of the people; and presented to the council the letters of the magistrates of Strasbourg. The Genevese, charmed at re-possessing him, wrote to Strasbourg to obtain his final release. Strasbourg at length relinquished Calvin to the reiterated entreaties of Geneva; bestowing upon him his citizenship, and wishing to continue to him the emoluments he had received, which, however, he refused, though he went to a very diminished income at Geneva.

Firm to his principles, because he thought them the basis of the public weal, he applied himself immediately, upon his return to Geneva, to prevent the corruption of morals, and projected an ecclesiastical police, which he submitted to the council. He revised the ecclesiastical ordinances with some

magistrates, who were appointed to assist him. These laws were presented to the general council, who sanctioned them on the 20th of November 1541. It was evident how far Calvin was from wishing to give too much power to the ecclesiastical body, so well was the ecclesiastical authority balanced by the civil. This tribunal of morals, called the Consistory, was originally composed of laics and ecclesiastics, but the number of the former was then most considerable. This body, respectable for the importance and delicacy of its constitution, had no power to inflict corporal punishments; but merely to refer the more important cases to the council, with its own judgment on the evidence. The prosperity of Geneva long remained the happy fruit of these wise laws, which contributed powerfully to maintain the purity of the ancient morals. They contributed greatly to the lustre and preservation of the republic; and it might easily be proved, that one of the causes of the misfortunes of Geneva was, the diminution of the influence of those laws upon individuals. Rome was lost when the voices of the censors could no longer be heard; and Sparta fell with the credit of those who were charged with the care of watching over the public morals, and of making virtue respected.

Shortly after his return he composed a catechism in Latin and in French, divided into questions and answers. This work, which proved highly useful to the church, was so well received by different nations, that it was not only translated into many

living languages, such as the German, the English, the Scotch, the Flemish, the Spanish, and the Italian, but also into Hebrew and into Greek.*

Out of respect to Farel and Viret, Calvin dedicated his Commentary upon the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus, to them. "In short, their mutual affection was so great, that they were called the TRIVET; *i. e.* a ring with three feet; and they were called so to signify their firm union in supporting the weighty cause of the Reformation. Beza hath very well expressed the particular character of those three great men, and good friends, Calvin, Farel, and Viret, in the following epigram:

"Gallica mirata est Calvinum Ecclesia nuper
Quo nemo docuit doctius:
Est quoque te nuper mirata Farelle tonantem
Quo nemo tonuit fortius:
Et miratur adhuc fundentem mella Viretum:
Quo nemo fatur dulcius.
Scilicet aut tribus his servabere Testibus olim,
Aut interibis Gallica."†

Notwithstanding the relief which Calvin continually received from Farel and from Viret, it is not easy to conceive how he sustained his various labours; especially if we consider that he was the

* It was translated into Hebrew by Emmanuel Tremellius, and into Greek by Henrie Etienne.

† The Church History of Geneva. By the Rev. Andrew Le Mercier, 1732.

subject of several violent and continual disorders. During a fortnight in each month, he preached every day; gave three lectures in theology every week; assisted at all the deliberations of the Consistory, and at the meetings of the pastors; met the congregation every Friday; instructed the French churches by the frequent advices which they solicited from him; defended the Reformation against the attacks of its enemies, and particularly those of the French priests; was forced to repel his numerous antagonists, by various books which he composed for that purpose; and found time to publish several other works, which, by their solidity and depth, are calculated for the instruction of every age.

But these occupations formed only a part of the labours of this great man: the council charged him with many painful and difficult commissions; and he was obliged to undertake long and frequent voyages. The council, who knew that he was an excellent civilian, as well as theologian, consulted him habitually in all important concerns. He was particularly employed in framing the edicts and legislative acts of the town, which were completed and approved in the year 1543. By his reputation and his eloquence he prevented the usual troubles of a rising government, and inspired confidence amongst the different bodies of the state: they knew the extent of his talents; they respected his integrity, and reposed confidently in the inviolable attachment which he ever manifested for justice and truth.

In the year 1543, he presented the church of Geneva with a liturgy, together with directions as to the manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, and Baptism.

At this time, Charles V. appeared anxious for a general council, in which affairs relating to the Catholic and Reformed religions might be discussed; but this plan, far from pleasing the Pope, excited his warmest indignation. Nor was it indeed likely that his holiness should be so unconversant with the interests of a splendid and secular hierarchy, as not to know that its most formidable enemy was a spirit of free inquiry and ample discussion: following, therefore, his apparent interest, he preferred the convenient asylum of infallibility. Paul III. was not, however, ashamed to publish his sentiments on this plan; but Calvin abundantly repelled the arguments of the pontiff, at the diet assembled at Spire. In another work, which appeared at this time, he proved the necessity of a reform of the church.

A great name is a signal for calumny to the envious; they unite in order to destroy it. It is true, that Calvin often made himself enemies by saying cutting truths; his zeal exasperated him against those who either attacked truth, or wounded virtue: perhaps a consciousness of superiority rendered him severe upon those who disturbed him by ill-founded attacks, or unreasonable obstinacy.

Calvin became acquainted with Castallio in the year 1539, at Strasbourg. In a translation of the Bible into Latin, he had attempted to make the

ancient Hebrew writers speak in the language of Cicero, and even endeavoured to make them sometimes breathe the tender verses of Ovid: this version Calvin highly blamed, as well as several sentiments which it contained. Castallio, whose pride was wounded, asked permission of the council to dispute publicly with Calvin on the descent of Jesus Christ into hell, which they refused; but, from a love of truth, and a respect for liberty of thinking, he was allowed to commence that dispute before the assembly of ministers: it lasted a long while without any success. Castallio at length became so highly irritated, that he attacked Calvin in a sermon, and so grossly insulted the ministers of Geneva, that the council deposed him from the ministry. Castallio retired to Basil, where he persisted in his singularities, and in his hatred of Calvin, until the time of his death.

The Sorbonne, finding themselves supported by P. Liset, first president of the parliament of Paris, whose memory is execrated by all good characters, undertook to draw up some articles of faith; and though it was not difficult to detect the falsity of the dogmas which they contained, they were, notwithstanding, approved by the timid and the ignorant. This induced Calvin to publish a piece, in which, mingling the subtlety of raillery with the solidity of reasoning, he clearly displayed the errors of the Sorbonne.

"A letter, about this time, was intercepted from Calvin to Viret, and read before the council, ac-

cusing the Genevois of impiety and hypocrisy. Calvin, being questioned upon this letter, boldly justified it, but applied his reflections to particular persons; upon which he was acquitted; and he continued his disputations and publications upon religion with great success."*

Amongst other enemies, by whom the church was attacked, was Albert Pighius, whom Calvin withstood and refuted, notwithstanding his numerous avocations. Pighius, being a profound sophist, thought, that though Calvin was a formidable adversary, it would not be difficult to vanquish him; and that he could thus signalize himself, and obtain a cardinal's hat, as the price of his victory. But Calvin repelled the attacks of Pighius with so much vigour, that he found himself disappointed of the recompense which he had anticipated, and reaped from his temerity only shame and confusion. Melancthon, to whom Calvin dedicated his work, to testify the esteem in which he held it, wrote several letters, which were afterwards published, and which may serve to undeceive posterity with respect to the calumnies which have been thrown upon those illustrious men. A letter which Calvin wrote to the church of Montbelliard, is a sufficient answer to those who accuse him of severity in the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline.

To refute the errors of the Anabaptists, and of

* The Modern Part of an Universal History, by the Authors of the Ancient Part.

the libertines, who had revived the most detestable heresies of antiquity, he composed a work which it is impossible to read with attention without being shocked at their detestable doctrines. This work, however, displeased the Queen of Navarre; for though she was not infected with their errors, she was so fully persuaded of the merit of Quintin, and of Pocquet, the most famous leaders of that sect, whom Calvin had named in that work, and had so great a regard for them, that it was impossible to attack them without deeply wounding her.

Calvin, having learned that she supported those sectaries, wrote to her with such address and prudence, that, preserving the respect which was due to her, as well on account of her dignity, as of several kindnesses which she had bestowed upon the church, he addressed her with a boldness and freedom worthy a courageous servant of God, and represented to her the impropriety of defending such persons. Thus he maintained the dignity of his ministry; and his labours were so successful, that *that* execrable sect, which had begun to spread in France, was confined to Holland and the neighbouring countries.

"In the year 1541, John Calvin, who surpassed almost all the doctors of this age, in laborious application, constancy of mind, force of eloquence, and extent of genius, returned to Geneva, from whence the opposition of his enemies had obliged him to retire. On his settlement in that city, the affairs of the new church were committed to his

direction, and he acquired also a high degree of influence in the political administration of that republic. This event changed entirely the face of affairs, and gave a new aspect to the reformed church. For he not only undertook to give strength and vigour to the rising church, by framing the wisest laws and the most salutary institutions for the maintenance of order, and the advancement of true piety, but even proposed to render Geneva the mother, the seminary of all the reformed churches, as Wittemberg was of all the Lutheran communities. He laid a scheme for sending forth from this little republic the succours and ministers that were to promote and propagate the Protestant cause through the most distant nations, and aimed at nothing less than rendering the government, discipline, and doctrine of Geneva, the model and rule of imitation to the reformed churches throughout the world. The undertaking was certainly great, and worthy of the extensive genius and capacity of this eminent man; and great and arduous as it was, it was executed in part, nay, carried on to a very considerable length, by his indefatigable assiduity and inextinguishable zeal. It was with this view, that, by the fame of his learning, as well as by his epistolary solicitations and encouragements of various kinds, he engaged many persons of rank and fortune, in France, Italy, and other countries, to leave the places of their nativity, and to settle at Geneva; while others repaired thither merely out of curiosity to see a man whose

talents and exploits had rendered him so famous, and to hear the discourses which he delivered in public. Another circumstance, that contributed much to the success of his designs, was the establishment of an academy at *Geneva*, which the senate of that city founded at his request; and in which he himself, with his colleague, Theodore Beza, and other divines of eminent learning and abilities, taught the sciences with the greatest reputation. In effect, the lustre which these great men reflected upon this infant seminary of learning, spread its fame through the distant nations with such amazing rapidity, that all who were ambitious of a distinguished progress in either sacred or profane erudition, repaired to *Geneva;* and that *England*, *Scotland*, *France*, *Italy*, and *Germany*, seemed to vie with each other in the number of their studious youths, that were incessantly repairing to the new academy. By these means, and by the ministry of these his disciples, Calvin enlarged considerably the borders of the reformed church, propagated his doctrine, and gained proselytes and patrons to his theological system, in several countries of Europe."*

During this year, the plague made the greatest ravages in Geneva. Affected by the afflictions of his fellow citizens, and alarmed at the corrupt state of morals, which made him apprehensive of still more fearful evils, Calvin thundered from the pul-

* Mosheim.

pit against their vices: he also engaged the council to enact severer laws against fornication and adultery.* In the midst of the distress which he felt at the view of this exterminating scourge, which was depriving Geneva of its citizens, he experienced some consolation from the succours which he procured for the Vaudois, who had escaped the massacres of Merindol, and of Chabriere; having obtained for them a sum of money from the town of Strasbourg, and from the German princes. It was not in his own power to give any thing himself, because he possessed nothing; but, as he never asked for himself, so he always conscientiously distributed the liberality of his benefactors to those who were unfortunate.

The year 1541 was rendered "infamous, by that abominable and cruel edict which the Parliament of *Aquitaine* set forth against the poor *Waldenses* of *Merindol*, *Cabriers*, and those parts, whereby most unheard-of cruelties were exercised, not against some few, but against all of them, without any distinction of ages or sex, yea, to the very burning of their towns. Some of these that escaped flying to Geneva, Master Calvin was the more afflicted for them, and careful of them, be-

* "In the year 1542, the plague being at Geneva, the great palace was fitted up for an hospital; but the magistrates held Calvin in so great esteem, that they would not suffer him to attend the infected, and he went to Strasbourg, where he renewed his disputations with Caroline." —*Modern Part of Universal History.*

cause a little before he had written consolatory letters to them, and sent them faithful pastors for the instructing of them out of the pure gospel, and had also (where they were in danger before) preserved them by his intercession to the German Princes and Helvetians."*

"In the year 1545, the province of Provence, was governed by a nobleman of the name of Opede; during whose administration that whole department was such a scene of cruelty, devastation, and slaughter of the saints of the Most High, as is almost too horrible to be related: and therefore a specimen may suffice. Commissions were executed in great abundance against the heretics, by the advocate Guerin, and war proclaimed by sound of trumpet, both at Aix and Marseilles. The troops being levied, were joined by five ensigns of the old bands of Piedmont, on which the army was put in motion. On the 14th of April they arrived at Cadinet, and on the 16th began to set fire to the villages of Cabriers, Pepin La Mothe, and St. Martin. The peasantry and labourers were slain without making resistance; their wives and daughters violated, pregnant females and little children massacred without pity or compassion. The governor issued a proclamation, that none should dare, on pain of the halter, to give food or shelter to any of the fugitives. The soldiers ransacked, burnt, and

* Marrow of Ecclesiastical History. By Samuel Clark, 1675.

pillaged whatever came in their way, leaving none of the inhabitants alive but such as were reserved for the gallies. On the 17th, Opede put himself at the head of the Piedmontees, and on the following day caused the villages of Larmarin, Ville Laure, and Trezemines, to be burnt, while the Sieur de la Rocque burnt Genson and la Rocque. On his arrival at Merindol, Opede found the town wholly deserted, except by one person, a kind of idiot, who surrendered himself without resistance to the soldiers. Finding no other person on whom to wreak his vengeance, Opede caused him to be fastened to a tree and shot to death; after which he gave orders for the village, consisting of two hundred houses, to be pillaged, burnt, and rased to the ground.

"The town of Cabriers still remained: but they surrounded the walls, and were proceeding to batter it down with cannon shot. Sixty peasants, who were shut up within the town, probably having undertaken to defend it, gave them to understand, that it was unnecessary to be at the pains of battering down the walls, since they were ready to open the gates to them, and to leave the country and go to Geneva, or into Germany, with their wives and children, leaving every thing behind them, if a safe passage should be granted them. The Lord of Cabriers interceded in their behalf; but Opede, getting within the city, ordered the men to be conveyed into a meadow, where he caused them to be hewn in pieces by the sword, the murderous execu-

tioners amusing themselves at the same time by trying their dexterity in cutting off their heads, arms, and legs. The females he ordered to be shut up in a barn, which was then filled with straw and set on fire, when they were all consumed, many of them being in a state of pregnacy. On searching the town, many of the inhabitants were found secreted in vaults and caverns; but they were brought into the hall of the castle, and barbarously massacred in the presence of Opede. The women and children who had taken refuge in the temple (probably a place of worship) were exposed to the ruffians of Avignon, who slew about 800, without distinction of age or sex. Many of the inhabitants of Merindol and other places, foreseeing the evil, had betaken themselves to flight; but they were now pursued by Opede and his army over rocks and mountains, and forced to great extremities and distress. When overtaken, they supplicated that they might be permitted to retire to Geneva with their wives and children; but the monster answered, that he would send them, with their wives and children, to dwell with the devils in the infernal regions, so as to blot out the very memory of them from the face of the earth."*

* See History of the Waldenses, by William Jones; a work in the highest degree creditable to the industry and talents of its Author.

The recent persecution of the French Protestants,

Lo! stalking from a murky cave,
And pointing to a new-made grave,
Crown'd with a garland steep'd in tears,
The Monster, BIGOTRY, appears!

At his approach, with instant dread,
We bless our friends already dead,
And hail the tomb for ever blest,
Where weary souls securely rest.

Offspring of hell, and death's ally!
Thy music is the orphan's cry;
The widow's blighted heart thy feast,
Thine agent the cold-blooded priest.

The nation's annals thou hast stain'd,
The feeling heart, how deeply pain'd!
But thou, destroyer, shalt be slain,
And freedom reign on earth again.

The controversy respecting the Supper of our Lord was at this time renewed. Osiander, a vain

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which has disgraced the Nineteenth Century, and which the ecclesiastical historian will not fail to put upon record, having excited the sympathy of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations in London and its vicinity, collections have, by their means, been made in the metropolis, and various parts of the kingdom, amounting to *six thousand two hundred pounds*, the greater part of which has been transmitted to the pastors of the French Protestant Churches. Several letters have been received from the French Protestants, acknowledging the seasonable relief thus afforded, and expressing a conviction that the conduct of their British friends had interposed a shield between them and their enemies.

and proud man, of an ardent spirit, having rekindled the fire of discord, which seemed entirely extinguished, Calvin did all in his power to terminate this difference, and with this view wrote several letters. Osiander refused to listen to the wise counsels of Calvin and of Melancthon; but the salutary work of calming the commotions which had long continued between the Lutherans and the Reformed, concerning the eucharist, "seemed to be facilitated by the theological system that was adopted by John Calvin, a native of Noyon, in France, who was pastor and professor of divinity at Geneva, and whose genius, learning, eloquence, and talents, rendered him respectable, even in the eyes of his enemies. This great man, whose particular friendship for Melancthon was an incidental circumstance highly favourable to the intended reconciliation, proposed an explication of the point in debate, that modified the crude hypothesis of Zuingle, and made use of all his credit and authority among the Swiss, and more particularly at Zurich, where he was held in the highest veneration, in order to obtain their assent to it. The explication he proposed was not indeed favourable to the doctrine of Christ's bodily presence in the eucharist, which he persisted in denying: he supposed, however, that a certain *divine virtue* or efficacy was communicated by Christ, with the *bread* and *wine*, to those who approached this holy sacrament with a lively faith, and with upright hearts; and to render this notion still more satisfactory, he expressed it in almost the

same terms which the Lutherans employed in inculcating their doctrines."*

A Genevese of the name of Troillet, who, though young, was consummately artful, after having counterfeited the hermit in France, returned to Geneva. As Calvin was remarkable for his penetration into characters, he soon developed this man, notwithstanding the pains which he took to conceal his vices under false appearances. Calvin at first reproved him privately with great mildness; but finding that his charitable counsels were useless to him, and that his audacity and his insolence increased daily, he undertook to reprove him publicly. But this hypocrite, far from profiting by these reproofs, endeavoured to avail himself of the protection of those, whose vices Calvin was accustomed to condemn. One of the pastors having recently died, he had the effrontery to aim at succeeding him. Calvin opposed him; and having shewn the contrariety of such conduct to the word of God, he obtained, by permission of the council, the enforcement of the rules of the church.

There were also at this time certain persons, who, having renounced the Protestant faith through dread of persecution, flattered themselves that there was no harm in remaining in the external communion of the church of Rome, provided they embraced the true religion in their hearts. And because Calvin, who condemned so pernicious a sen-

* Mosheim's History of the Reformed Church.

timent, was considered by them as carrying his severity to an extreme, he shewed clearly that his opinion was in unison, not only with those of the fathers of the church, but also with the doctrine of the most learned theologians of the age, such as Melancthon, Bucer, and Martyr, as well as the ministers of Zurich; and so completely extinguished that error, that all pious persons censured the Nicodemites; a name given to those who defended their dissimulation by the example of Nicodemus.

The introduction of the following letter, in illustration of the solicitude of Calvin for the purity of the reformed worship, needs no apology. The justness of the sentiments, the perspicuity of the reasoning, and especially the veneration which it discovers for the illustrious character to whom it was addressed, must recommend it to the approbation of every intelligent Protestant.

"To the truly excellent Doctor of the Christian
"Church, MARTIN LUTHER.

"My highly honoured Father in JESUS CHRIST,

"Finding those Frenchmen who had been restored from the darkness of Popery to the light of the true doctrine made no alteration in their confession of faith; but that they continued to sully themselves with the profanations of the papists, as if they had no relish for the true doctrine; I could not refrain from reproving such extreme stupidity, with that vehemence and asperity which I believe they deserved. For can we call that

faith, which, buried at the bottom of the soul, never discovers itself by any confession? Or ought we to call that religion, which disguises itself under the mask of idolatry?—I do not here undertake a thorough discussion of the question: I have already explained myself sufficiently in two small works which I have composed on that topic. And if you will take the trouble to glance at them, you will better understand my opinion on that question, and upon what reasons it is founded. Some persons who previously slept in great security, buried in profound slumbers, being roused by the perusal of them, have begun to consider what they ought to do. But because it is very hard to the flesh, either to neglect its own interests, so far as to endanger life; or so to irritate the minds of others as to become the object of public hatred; or to abandon our property and our country, and thus to condemn ourselves to a voluntary banishment; it happens but too frequently that these difficulties prevent a constant and firm resolution. They allege also other reasons, which indeed appear plausible, but which, however, prove sufficiently, that their sole design is only to seek pretexts to conceal the irresolution which agitates their minds. They desire to have your judgment, for which they entertain a just veneration, and which will have great weight to deliver them from these uncertainties, and to confirm them in their duty. They have, therefore, entreated me to send you an express, which may

bring back your conclusion on this subject. This office I could by no means refuse to their solicitation, both because I thought it important for them to be upheld by your authority, that they might not ever float in these uncertainties, and that I myself felt disposed to solicit this help. Thus, my highly honoured Father in the Lord, I conjure you by Jesus Christ, to bear with this importunity, both for their sakes and mine; and to read for your entertainment, in your leisure hours, the letter addressed to you in their name, and my two small books; or to employ somebody to read them, who shall report the principal particulars to you; and to take the trouble in the second place to explain to us in an answer of three words, your opinion on this subject. It is contrary to my inclination to divert you from those great and various affairs which occupy you, and to give you this trouble. But I am firmly persuaded that according to your uniform equity, seeing that necessity urges me to make this request, you will easily forgive the liberty I take, and the trouble which I give you. Would to God that I were permitted to fly hence, that I might enjoy, at least for a few hours, your conversation! I should receive much more pleasure, and it would be much more advantageous to confer with you personally on this, and on various other subjects. But I hope, that what may not be granted to us on earth, will soon be given to us in the kingdom of God. Adieu, most illustrious man! most excellent minister of Jesus

Christ, and my highly honoured Father. I beseech the Lord to govern you by his Spirit unto the end, for the common good and edification of his church."*

"20*th Jan.* 1545.

The vigour with which Calvin attacked the vicious and their vices, brought upon him a thousand inconveniences from those who exposed themselves to the effects of his zeal and vigilance. A woman, whom he had reproved publicly, called him a *wicked* man. Calvin avenged himself by obtaining her pardon of the council, who had imprisoned, and intended to punish her.

The following year proved no less unfavourable to Calvin's repose. He was now obliged to cheer the drooping spirits of the Genevese, whom the designs of Charles V. against the reformed religion had alarmed. But, besides the cares which the fear of all those evils occasioned him, he was deeply afflicted at the state of Geneva, and the general and daring profligacy of its inhabitants.

At the head of these persons, was a man named Ami Perrin, who, by the suffrages of the people, had been made capitaine general. This man, knowing that neither his accomplices nor himself could thrive whilst the laws were maintained with vigour, and Calvin thundered against their vices

* Institution de la Religion Christienne. Traduit par Charles Icard. p. 145.

and their disorders, discovered this year what he had long projected; and because his pernicious designs were no sooner developed than they were crushed by the seigneurs, he remained some time quiet; but this was only with a view to a more public attack; for shortly afterwards, one of the seigneurs, instigated, as it has been supposed, by two ministers who were given to wine, and who had good reasons to fear the severity of the laws, accused Calvin of teaching false doctrine. But, far from being injured by the malice of his enemies, he was fully justified from this calumny, his accuser being condemned as infamous, and the two ministers deposed.*

While Calvin was called to contend against those whose love of independence, and whose violent passions removed them far from decency and virtue, which he wished to establish in Geneva, he triumphed over their cabal by his firmness and his courage; nor did he ever favour those whom rank and fortune seemed to authorize to follow their inclinations. He summoned the wife of a principal citizen before the Consistory for having blasphemed in a private house; she was condemned to a pecuniary punishment. Ami Per-

* "In the year 1546, Perrin and his followers had plotted to murder in one night all the French refugees; but the conspirators were detected, prevented, and punished." —*The Church History of Geneva, by the Rev. A. Le Mercier*, 1732.

rin himself, whose life was very disorderly, was excommunicated, deprived of his place of counsellor, and condemned to two months' imprisonment; but, although this man had always encouraged the enemies of Calvin, and been the cause of all the troubles which he had experienced from the government, Calvin, nevertheless, employed his eloquence and his interest to procure the repeal of his sentence, and had the Christian satisfaction to see his mortal enemy released from prison, and restored to his employment.

Germany was at this time reduced to the greatest extremity; her towns having either surrendered to the emperor, or been taken by force, she beheld the sudden ruin of a work, which had been the labour of many years. Happy, indeed, were they whom death prevented from being spectators of that dreadful desolation. It is not to be doubted that these calamities deeply afflicted Calvin, since it is certain that when the churches enjoyed a profound peace, he took as great an interest in those that were most remote, as if they had been committed to his care. Besides which, it was impossible for him to learn that those illustrious characters, Melancthon, Bucer, and Martyr, his dearest friends, were exposed to the most imminent perils, without being penetrated with the profoundest grief. Great, however, as were his afflictions, he supported them with heroic courage, and though persecuted by the wicked, his constancy and his virtue remained unshaken.

In the year 1547, and on the 26th of July, Jacques Gruet was beheaded. Gruet was one of those men whom vice and public disorders render famous: impatient under the restraints of the laws, he had the audacity to affix against the pulpit of the cathedral, a libel against the reformed Genevese, and particularly the reformers and ministers. Being immediately apprehended, and his papers and letters examined, they were found to contain several violent passages against Calvin; as well as a petition which he wished to present to the General Council against the ecclesiastical discipline, the object of which was to suppress the bounds which it imposed upon those who led a vicious life. A paper was also found containing objections against the authority of the sacred books, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and the last judgment. His sentence condemns him for having spoken with contempt of religion; for having maintained that laws, human and divine, were the work of caprice; for having written impious letters and licentious songs; for having maintained that fornication was not criminal, when both parties consented; for having attempted to overthrow the ecclesiastical institutions, and the authority of the Consistory; for having threatened the reformers and the ministers; for having spoken disrespectfully of them, and particularly of Calvin; for having written letters calculated to irritate the court of France against Calvin; and to engage the King of France to write to the council against

him; and finally for having threatened the council itself. The reasons of this condemnation, judging from the sentence itself, demonstrate that the death of Gruet was the effect of his impiety, and of his threats against the government.

During these troubles, Calvin composed a work entitled *L'Antidote*, against the doctrine contained in the first seven sections of the Council of Trent: and wrote also to the church of Rouen, to fortify her against the artifices and the errors of a certain monk of the order of St. Francis, who was endeavouring to infect that church with the heresy of Carpocrates.*

Undiverted by these foreign cares, he continued his ordinary occupations, and composed his excellent Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul. As many persons entertained a high opinion of judicial astrology, he justly exposed it in an elegant work which he published on the subject. Having received an obliging letter from Brentius, who was exiled at Basil, he consoled him with much tenderness. And it were to be wished, that Brentius had ever preserved the sentiments which he expressed at that time, and had not broken the bonds which attached him to Calvin. He also

* Carpocrates was a heretic of the second century, who flourished at Alexandria about the year 130. He revived the Gnostic heresy, to which he added the antinomian doctrine, that actions are indifferent, as the passions are planted in human nature by God himself. His son Epiphanius taught the same opinions.—*Mosheim.*

wrote to Bucer, who was in England, and after exhorting him to avow more openly his opinion on the Supper of the Lord, he renewed the assurances of a sincere and ardent friendship. To the Duke of Somerset, Protector of England, he sent such useful and important advice, as, had it been followed, would have saved the British church from many calamities.

The church of Geneva, though surrounded by afflictions, increased rapidly; and Calvin received, with every mark of tenderness, those who were banished from their country on account of their attachment to the gospel. God, likewise, so eminently blessed the labours of his servant, that the faction of the seditious was almost entirely subdued. He stood, indeed, in great need of this relief; for he now met with a severe trial in the loss of his wife, a person of singular virtue and merit. But though extremely affected by this affliction, he endured it with a constancy and resignation becoming his exalted character.

In the year 1548, the celebrated Beza, accompanied by his friend John Crispin, settled at Geneva. Upon his arrival, he embraced the reformation, and publicly espoused the person to whom he had long been attached: influenced by gratitude, he soon after visited his respected master, Wolmar.

He had no sooner returned to Geneva, than the senate of Bern appointed him professor of Greek, in the academy of Lausanne, where he composed, in French verse, a drama, entitled *Abraham sacri-*

fiant, which procured him considerable reputation. At the request of the French refugees, he explained the epistle to the Romans, and those of Peter; at the same period, he projected the edition of the New Testament, which he presented to the public in the year 1566.

At the pressing solicitation of Calvin, Beza undertook to finish the work of Marot upon the Psalms, and to translate into French verse, those which the poet had left unfinished. This undertaking he executed with success: the French churches adopted them universally, and they were printed with the permission of the King of France, in 1561.

The occupations of this laborious man were not always equally useful or honourable to himself: in 1554, he published a book, *De Hæriticis à Magistratu gladio puniendis*, in answer to Faustus Socinus, and especially to Sebastian Castalio, who had, in the year 1554, printed a work, entitled *De Hæriticis gladio non puniendis*. Castalio had, in this work, urged some of the principal arguments in favour of tolerance; the fate of Servetus induced him to write that work, to which Christian Charity affixed her seal. Beza's apology for the council of Geneva, in the affair of Servetus, was strictly in unison with the spirit which predominated throughout Europe: Let us, however, congratulate ourselves upon being born in an age in which intolerance is become revolting, and its apology a mark of infamy.

Beza was employed, in the year 1558, with Fa-

rel and Jean Budé, to solicit the protestant princes of Germany to use their intercession with the King of France, in behalf of those Frenchmen who had embraced the reformation, and who were at that time cruelly persecuted. It was on this occasion that the Genevese theologian enjoyed the satisfaction of meeting at Francfort, the pious, the amiable Melancthon.

On his return, Calvin persuaded Beza to apply for his release to the senate of Bern, who reluctantly complied with his request. Beza immediately repaired to Geneva, in order to cultivate the society of his friend, whose wisdom and prudence he closely copied. With a view to attach so useful a person to the republic, the council presented him with his freedom, in the month of April, 1559. In the month of May, he was admitted one of the pastors; and in June, appointed professor of theology, and principal of the academy which had been recently founded.

Held in the highest consideration throughout Europe, some French noblemen endeavoured to attract him to the court of the King of Navarre, with a view to his disseminating the principles of the reformation there: the Prince of Condé, and the King of Navarre himself, applied to the Council of Geneva to spare him. He departed, and was received with respect by those exalted characters, who, while they honoured religion, reflected the highest honour upon themselves; and who believed they were contributing most effectually to the hap-

piness of the people, by diffusing among them that truth, the value of which they had themselves experienced.

From some of Beza's letters to Calvin, it appears that he met with a very flattering reception from the King of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé; he observes also, that Catharine talked to him with interest about Calvin, his afflictions, and his works. Beza displayed a noble courage in informing that princess of the cruelties exercised against the protestants; he had even a conversation at St. Germains, on the 23d of August, with the Cardinal de Lorraine, in the queen's apartment, which appeared to justify the warmest hopes of an amicable re-union; they were, however, lamentably disappointed at the conference of Poissy, which was opened on the 4th of September, by a French discourse pronounced by Beza, and which was universally admired.

Endowed eminently with a public spirit, and supplied with that persevering energy which surmounts all obstacles, the valuable life of Beza ranked high among his contemporaries as a public blessing; and secured for him an imperishable monument in the gratitude of posterity. At the advanced age of eighty-six, he terminated with serenity and confidence, a life of piety and of faith, and entered into the joy of his Lord.*

* The testimony of a Catholic Historian to the talents of Beza, is too important to be omitted. "It cannot be

The churches of Saxony, not being united respecting the nature and use of indifferent things, consulted Calvin, who frankly gave his opinion on the subject; and as Melancthon was accused (though unjustly) of too much indifference on this subject, he wrote to him respecting it.

While God was on the one hand chastising the German churches with the scourge of discord, he manifested his compassion to the churches of Switzerland; for Calvin and Farel having made a visit to Zurich, composed all the differences which had arisen among them on the subject of the Sacraments. Articles were agreed upon by the consent of the churches of Switzerland, and those of the Grisons; and this agreement united the church of Zurich and that of Geneva in the closest bonds.

About this time Calvin wrote two letters, replete with profound erudition, to Lœlius Socinus; who died at Zurich, after a long residence there.*

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denied but Beza was a man of fine parts: he was a ready, subtil, pleasant and polite man; he knew the world; spake with abundance of readiness; and had a great memory, and a good deal of learning."—*Du Pin.*

* "Lœlius Socinus was born at Sienna, in 1525, and designed by his father for the profession of the law; but having embraced the principles of the reformation, he deemed it expedient to quit Italy in 1547. After passing through several countries, he settled at Zurich, where he was suspected of Arianism, and received a remonstrance from Calvin on the subject. Socinus profited by the hint, but more by the fate of Servetus, and retired to Poland; from thence he went to Venice, and afterwards returned

The year 1550 was remarkable for the tranquillity which the churches enjoyed, and the regulations which were made at Geneva. For the Consistory came to a resolution, that the ministers should not confine their instructions to public preaching, but that at certain seasons of the year, they should visit private families, accompanied by an elder, to explain the Christian doctrines, and induce individuals to give an account of their faith. These private visits were so useful to the church, that it is not easy to calculate the fruit which they produced.

The Consistory gave directions also, that the celebration of the birth of Christ should be deferred until a few days after Christmas; and that no days should be observed but Sunday. And because these changes offended many persons, Calvin wrote a piece on the subject, which he addressed to his old and faithful friend, Lauren de Normandie.

The following year was not so happy as the two preceding; for, besides the death of Bucer, and that of Jacques Vadian, Consul of St. Gal, persons of singular virtue and profound erudi-

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to Zurich, where he died in 1562. He was the author of the sect of Socinians, having gathered many followers who embraced his opinions, which were, that Christ was only a man, that the Holy Spirit is nothing more than an attribute, and that the doctrines of original sin, atonement, and divine grace, have no foundation in scripture."—*Bayle.*

tion, which deeply afflicted Calvin and the whole church; the faction of the seditious, which had been long silent, revived suddenly, and occasioned inconceivable evils and disorders; for they not only asserted, that, the right of citizenship ought not to be bestowed upon strangers, who took refuge in Geneva; but, in order to affront Calvin, having met him in the street as he was returning from preaching, they forced him into the middle of the road, and attempted to throw Raimond, his colleague, over the bridge of the Rhone. They afterwards excited a tumult at the church of St. Gervais, because the minister (following a rule which had been made on sufficient grounds) had refused to give the name of Baltazar to a child whom they had brought for baptism.

Calvin, not being able to remedy these evils, bore them with Christian resignation and invincible patience.

But farther troubles awaited Geneva; the immediate cause of which was a man, named Hierome Bolzec, who, having quitted the habit, retained the spirit and the inclinations of a monk. This man, after having affronted the Duchesse de Ferrare, was banished from her court; and having taken the degree of doctor of medicine, retired to Geneva. But, not succeeding in the profession which he had embraced, he aspired to the reputation of a celebrated theologian. With this view he corrupted the doctrine of predestination, by a false and absurd dogma, which he was bold

enough to maintain in the public congregation. Calvin endeavoured, at first, with all possible mildness, to shew him his mistakes, and, by private conversation, to recover him from his errors.

On the 15th of August, Bolzec publicly asserted his sentiments in reply to a sermon which had been preached on the subject of predestination. His confidence was increased, by supposing Calvin to be absent, as he did not see him in his usual place; for as the service was commenced when he arrived, he remained amongst the crowd. No sooner had Bolzec concluded his discourse, than Calvin arose; and though he spoke without premeditation, he excited the esteem and admiration of all who heard him; for he alleged so many passages of scripture, and so many testimonies from St. Austin; refuted him by so many unanswerable reasons, and convicted him with so much force and evidence, that notwithstanding the effrontery of this unfrocked monk, he was covered with confusion. A magistrate present ordered him to be sent to prison, and he was afterwards brought to trial. Jacques de Bourgogne interceded for him. Bolzec appealed to the judgment of the neighbouring churches; he was afterwards ordered to be set at liberty upon finding security; but not procuring any, he remained in prison, and was finally banished on the 18th of December.

Bolzec retired to a neighbouring town, where he caused great disturbances; and having been twice driven from the canton of Bern, he repaired.

to France, and there used all his efforts to obtain the charge of the ministry, expressing a sincere repentance, and an anxious desire to be reconciled with the church of Geneva. But persecution being again revived in France, he resumed the study of medicine, and renouncing the protestant religion, became a catholic.

The ministers of Geneva, in a public assembly, having illustrated and established the doctrine of predestination, approved of the work which Calvin had written on the subject. But though the ministers of the principal churches unitedly inculcated the doctrine, there were not wanting some in the canton of Bern, who said that Calvin made God the author of sin, notwithstanding this impious sentiment had been clearly refuted by Calvin, in a book which he had written expressly against the libertines.

Castalio was at this time teaching Pelagianism at Basil, though he attempted to disguise his object under the most specious appearances. This controversy continued several years, in the course of which the hermit, already mentioned, opposed Calvin. Unable to procure an appointment to the ministerial office, he had embraced the profession of the law, and was become the advocate of the seditious. Finding himself supported by the profligate, he requested a public dispute with Calvin before the council, where the subject was debated with considerable warmth. But as Calvin rested his sentiments upon the authority of reason and of

scripture, and his adversary was armed with impudence alone, the issue of the dispute was eminently favourable to our reformer: the truth triumphed over error, and the writings of Calvin were recognized as orthodox by the suffrages of those who had condemned him.

Retiring from the sanguinary measures of Queen Mary, John Knox, the *Elijah* of the North, as he has been justly called, repaired to Geneva. "The celebrated CALVIN, who was then in the zenith of his reputation and usefulness, had completed the ecclesiastical establishment of that city; and, having surmounted the opposition raised by those who envied his authority, or disliked his system of doctrine and discipline, was securely seated in the affections of the citizens. His writings were already translated into the different languages of Europe; and Geneva was thronged with strangers from Germany, France, Poland, Hungary, and even from Spain and Italy, who came to consult him about the advancement of the Reformation, or to find shelter from the persecutions to which they were exposed in their native countries. Calvin was respected by none more than by the Protestants of England; and at the desire of Archbishop Cranmer, he had imparted to the Protector Somerset, and to Edward VI. his advice as to the best method of advancing the Reformation in that kingdom. Knox was affectionately received by him as a refugee from England; and an intimate friendship was soon formed between them, which sub-

sisted until the death of Calvin in 1564. They were nearly of the same age; and there was a striking similarity in their sentiments and in the more prominent features of their character. The Genevan Reformer was highly pleased with the piety and talents of Knox; who, in his turn, entertained a greater esteem and deference for Calvin than for any other of the Reformers."*

Shortly after the ascension of Elizabeth to the throne, Knox returned to England, where he was not unmindful of his countrymen; he had the address to fix the Scots reformation upon a solid basis, by means of the treaty of Leith, concluded in the month of July 1560. He even succeeded in establishing an ecclesiastical discipline, similar to that which prevailed in Geneva; and the superintendence of the reformed religion throughout the district of Edinburgh was committed to his care.

This eminent Scotsman died at Edinburgh in 1572, and was interred with great ceremony. The Earl of Morton, who attended his funeral, pronounced the following eulogium upon him:— *There lies He who never feared the face of man.*

"Knox bore a striking resemblance to Luther in personal intrepidity, and in popular eloquence. He approached nearest to Calvin in his religious sentiments, in the severity of his manners, and in a certain impressive air of melancholy which per-

* Life of John Knox. By Thomas M'Crie, D. D. p. 261.

vaded his character. And he resembled Zuinglius in his ardent attachment to the principles of civil liberty, and in combining his exertions for the reformation of the church with uniform endeavours to improve the political state of the people. Not that I would place our reformer on a level with this illustrious triumvirate. There is a splendour which surrounds the great German Reformer, partly arising from the intrinsic heroism of his character, and partly reflected from the interesting situation in which his long and doubtful struggle with the court of Rome placed him in the eyes of Europe, which removes him at a distance from all who started in the same glorious career. The Genevan Reformer surpassed Knox in the extent of his theological learning, and in the unrivalled solidity and clearness of his judgment. And the Reformer of Switzerland, though inferior to him in masculine elocution, and in daring courage, excelled him in self-command, in prudence, and in that species of eloquence which steals into the heart, which persuades without irritating, and governs without assuming the tone of authority.

"But, although 'he attained not to the first three,' I know not, among all the eminent men who appeared at that period, any name which is so well entitled to be placed next to theirs as that of Knox, whether we consider the talents with which he was endowed, or the important services which he performed."—*L. of Knox*, p. 161.

CHAP. III.

An Examination of the Reformer's Conduct in the affair of Servetus.

WE are now arrived at a most delicate part of the history of this illustrious reformer; the part which he confessedly took in the punishment of Servetus.

The history of Servetus, so often referred to, and so little understood, merits the minute attention of all who are sufficiently impartial to weigh the opposing interests and circumstances which mark this tragical transaction. The blemishes, real or pretended, of the reformer, having been maliciously employed to discredit the Reformation itself, it becomes of no small importance to elucidate this point of history, and to clear Calvin from the injurious imputations which have been falsely thrown upon him.

It has been confidently pretended, and boldly asserted, that Calvin had, through life, nourished an implacable hatred against Servetus, and that the Genevese theologian had employed all his efforts to satiate it in the blood of the unhappy Spaniard; that he denounced him to the magistrates of Vienne, and occasioned him to be arrested on the day after his arrival at Geneva. Things advanced with an air of confidence are readily be-

lieved, and it is scarcely suspected that they may be false. Bolzec, however, the mortal enemy of Calvin, who wrote the life of that illustrious man merely to blast his memory, and who was contemporary with the facts which he relates; and Maimbourg, equally known by his partialities and his falsehoods, have never dared to advance those things which modern historians have not been ashamed to risk. Bolzec says, that Servetus quitted Lyons to establish himself at Charlieu, because "his pride, his insolence, and the danger of his projects, made him equally feared and hated." He adds, that "Servetus returned to Lyons; that he entered into a correspondence with Calvin; that he communicated to him his ideas; that Calvin combated them with force, and that Servetus persisted in them with obstinacy; that he sent him his work entitled *Restitutio Christianismi*, which he printed at that time; and that Calvin, indignant, declined all aquaintance with him."*

It is evident that Calvin did not betray the se-

* "Restitutio Christianismi, hoc est totius ecclesiæ apostolicæ ad sua limina vocatio: in integrum restitutâ cognitione Dei, fidei Christianæ, justificationis nostræ, Regenerationis, Baptismi, et Cœnæ Domini manducationis; restituto denique nobis regno cœlesti, Babylonis impiâ captivitate soluto, et anti-christo cum suis penitus destructo." —This book is extremely scarce; all the copies were burned at Vienne and Frankfort: it has been long doubted whether there were any remaining; but it appears certain that Doctor Mead possessed a copy, which found its way into the library of the Duke de la Valiere.

cret of Servetus, and that he did not occasion his arrest at Vienne, since he wrote to Viret and to Farel, that, *if that heretic came to Geneva, he would take care that he should be capitally punished.*

The ideas of Calvin included in this revolting sentence, were the ideas of all persons and of all sects: they constituted the spirit of the laws, and of the public administration of the times.

Disputes are frequently the source of intolerance; we easily learn to hate those who try to convince us that we are wrong: this was not, however, the case with Calvin; he bore with Servetus as long as there was any hope of reclaiming him. Servetus began with employing injurious expressions of the grossest kind. It is certain that he had rendered himself odious to all who knew him, and that the ideas of most persons agreed with those of Calvin on the punishment which he merited. It is evident, from the letters of Farel and of Viret, that they did not blame the conduct of Calvin in this affair. Bucer was not ashamed to write that "Servetus deserved something worse than death." The excellent, the gentle Melancthon, approved the punishment of Servetus. Writing to Calvin, he remarks: "In my opinion, your magistrates have acted justly, in putting to death a blasphemer, convicted by due process of law." The opinion of Melancthon on this subject is farther expressed in a letter to Bullinger:—"I have read your statement respecting the blasphemy of Servetus, and praise your piety

and judgment; and am persuaded that the Council of Geneva has done right in putting to death this obstinate man, who would never have ceased his blasphemies. I am astonished that any one can be found to disapprove of this proceeding; but I have transmitted you a few papers which will sufficiently explain our sentiments."* Farel expressly says, that "Servetus deserved a capital punishment." And Beza defended the sentence. All these celebrated men entertained the same opinion on the subject; and as no personal hatred of Servetus can be imputed to them, it is at least as unjust to accuse Calvin of it.

But Calvin, it is said, abused the confidence of Servetus; he sent to Vienne the letters which he had received from him, to which he added his work entitled *Restitutio Christianismi*, of which Servetus had made him a present. This accusation is mysterious: is it to be believed that Calvin, whose name was execrated in all catholic countries, could expect from their magistrates any attentions to his complaints, or any regard to his letters?

The extreme improbability of the correspondence here alluded to, may be inferred from the character of the individual to whom Calvin is said to have applied. "All historians agree in representing Cardinal Tournon to us as the

* Life of Melancthon, by F. A. Cox, A. M. 2d edit.

scourge of heresy. He caused the severest edicts to be published against the innovators. He established at Paris a fiery court (*Chambre Ardente*), which was properly an inquisition, and ordered all the tribunals of the kingdom to prosecute the new errors as crimes against the State. The fury of his zeal transported him so far, that he caused all the heretics to be burned who had the misfortune to fall into his hands. Behold the man they want to make a correspondent of Calvin by letters! Whatever wickedness they would load him with, they must suppose him a perfect blockhead to attempt such a correspondence by a criminal accusation of his enemy; as it would appear by the loud fits of laughter they make the cardinal fall into, upon receiving this letter.

"But, supposing that this reformer had been capable of such extravagant folly, how can we imagine that the cardinal, 'this scourge of heresy,' would have satisfied himself with laughing at this affair? That he made himself merry with the accuser, needs not surprise us; but that he neglected to prosecute such a heretic as Servetus, we cannot so easily be persuaded of. Thus Calvin himself gives no other reason in answer to the calumny we are refuting, as we shall see by his own words, that the calumny came originally from Servetus; and that Bolzec knew nothing of the matter, but from uncertain reports. 'I have no occasion,' says Calvin, 'to insist longer to answer such a frivolous calumny, which falls to the ground, when

I shall have said, in one word, that there is nothing in it. It is four years since Servetus forged this fable upon me, and made the report travel from Venice to Padua, where they made use of it according to their fancy; I don't dispute, however, if it was by deliberate malice he had forged such lies, to bring the hatred of many upon me, or whether fear made him suspicious: only I demand how it could happen, that since the time I discovered him, he has lived three years in the sight of his enemies, without being disquieted, or speaking one word about it to him; certainly either those who complain of me must confess, that it has been falsely invented, or that their martyr, Servetus, has had more favour from the papists than I; if this had been objected to me with justice, and that I had published it in order to have him punished by any person whatsoever, I would not have denied it, and I don't think it could have turned to my dishonour.' This I am confident is sufficient to satisfy reasonable men: above all, if we add to it, what Calvin had said immediately before the passage I have cited:—'A report flies about that I had endeavoured to have had Servetus apprehended in a popish country, *viz.* at Vienne; upon which a great many say, that I have not behaved discreetly in exposing him to the mortal enemies of the faith, as if I had thrown him in the jaws of wolves; but I pray you, from whence so suddenly this private dealing with the Pope's satellites? It is very credible, indeed, that we should correspond together by

letters, and that those who agree with me, as well as Belial agrees with Jesus Christ, should enter into a plot with such a mortal enemy, as with their own companion.'"

But, supposing Calvin could have been capable of such an absurdity, is it to be imagined that he could have kept silence during seven years; that he would not have persecuted him sooner; that he would not have sent to the places where Servetus resided the letters which he had received, and the work which he possessed? It is evident, however, that Calvin had corresponded with Servetus seven years; and the famous letter of Calvin, which Uttembogaert saw in the library of the King of France, shews that Calvin was then perfectly acquainted with his character, and that he had seen his famous work:—"Servetus lately wrote to me, and accompanied his letter with a large volume of his extravagant opinions, with a hectoring boast, that I should see extraordinary and unheard-of things, if I were willing he would come hither; but I was unwilling to give my promise; for if he should come, I would use my authority in such a manner as not to suffer him to depart alive."* This letter is dated in February 1546; Calvin evi-

* "Servetus nuper ad me scripsit, et litteris adjunxit magnum volumen suorum deliriorum cum thrasonicâ jactantiâ me stupenda ac inaudita visurum: si mihi placeat, huc se venturum recipit; sed nolo fidem meam interponere; nam si venerit, modò valeat mea autoritas, vivum exire nunquam patiar."

dently refers to the work entitled *Restitutio Christianismi:* he plainly discovers his judgment of it, and of the punishment which he thought its author deserved; but it is equally evident that he was very far from engaging him to come to Geneva, and that he had forewarned him of what he might expect to meet with, if he should have the temerity to appear in that city. It is, therefore, evident, that if Calvin endeavoured to keep Servetus from Geneva to induce him to avoid the punishment with which he threatened him, he could not possibly think of inflicting it upon him elsewhere, which would have been attended with considerable difficulty, if not absolutely impossible.

But what end could Calvin's letters to the magistrates of Vienne have answered? Calvin was assured that Servetus was known to be the author of the work entitled *Restitutio Christianismi*, since it bore the name of *Villanovanus*. Servetus was well known by this name: it was, therefore, useless for Calvin to send them intelligence which was public: neither was it more necessary for him to inform them what that book contained; a single perusal evinced it. It would have been absurd in Calvin to send them a copy of the work, since it had been printed in France, under their own eyes; so that it is difficult to imagine the possibility of the conduct of Calvin in this affair being what his enemies have represented it.

Farther; the sentence pronounced at Vienne against Servetus, takes no notice of any interpo-

sition on the part of Calvin: it condemns Servetus for his printed work, on the report of the Doctors in Theology consulted on the occasion; on the ground of the errors contained in that work; and, finally, on the confessions of that unhappy man. It is true that the magistrates of Vienne, having learned that Servetus corresponded with Calvin, demanded his letters with all writings relating to him; but the demand was made to the Council of Geneva, who complied with their request. From these circumstances it appears that Calvin had no share in sending the letters of Servetus, and that they had no influence upon the decision of Vienne, as no mention is made of them.

Happily, those persons who take pleasure in calumniating others, seldom consider all the circumstances of the facts which they wish to impose, but discover the imposture by the impossibility of harmonizing what they invent, with what is real. Thus the report that Calvin, instructed of the escape of Servetus from the prison of Vienne, caused him to be arrested two or three days after his arrival at Geneva, stands self-corrected; as it is certain that he left Vienne before the execution of the sentence which condemned him to be burnt in effigy on the 17th of June: supposing him to have been a fortnight in reaching Geneva, he must have arrived there in the beginning of July, at the latest: he was not, however, arrested until the 13th of August. It is absurd to say that he concealed himself in other places; for to what other places could

he have gone? His safety required him to quit those in which the Romish religion was established, lest the clamours of Vienne should have reached them; and Geneva was the first place in which he could hope for an asylum. It is therefore evident that Servetus, far from having been arrested upon his arrival at Geneva, must have resided there at least six weeks.

The laws of Geneva requiring that the accuser and the accused should enter the prison together, Calvin directed the process to be made by Nicolas de la Fontaine, his secretary, and a student in theology. Calvin confesses that this was done *with his knowledge*. De la Fontaine made himself a prisoner, requiring the detention of Servetus, and produced forty articles upon which he demanded that Servetus should be examined. Servetus was shortly afterwards found guilty. The lieutenant-criminal undertook the process at the instance of the procureur-general, and the student was liberated.

The principal accusations exhibited against Servetus were, First, his having asserted in his Ptolémée, that the Bible celebrated improperly the fertility of the land of Canaan, whilst it was unfruitful and barren. Secondly, his having called one God in three persons a Cerberus, a three-headed monster. Thirdly, his having taught that God was all, and that all was God. Servetus did not deny the truth of the principal accusations, but whilst in prison called the Trinity a Cerberus, a three-

headed monster; he also grossly insulted Calvin, and was so fearful that death would be the punishment of heresy at Geneva, as well as at other places, that he presented a petition on the 22d of August, in which he defended the cause of ignorance, and urged the necessity of toleration: the procureur-general replied to him in about eight days, and no doubt did it very ill. Servetus was condemned upon extracts from his books, *De Trinitatis Erroribus*, and *In Ptolemæum Commentarius;* from the edition of the Bible which he had published in 1552; from his book *Restitutio Christianismi;* and from a letter which he had written to Abel Paupin, a minister of Geneva.*

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* A copy of the sentence pronounced against Servetus will not be uninteresting to the reader. "We Syndics, judges of all criminal causes in this city, having witnessed the process made and instituted against you, on the part of our lieutenant in the aforesaid causes, instituted against you, Michel de Villeneuve, in the kingdom of Arragon, in Spain, in which your voluntary confessions in our hands, made and often reiterated, and the books before us produced, plainly shew that you, Servetus, have published false and heretical doctrines; and also despising all remonstrances and corrections, have, with a perverse inclination, sown and divulged them in a book published against God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; in sum, against all the true foundations of the Christian Religion, and have thereby tried to introduce trouble and schism into the Church of God, by which many souls may have been ruined and lost, things horrible, frightful, scandalous, and infectious, and have not been ashamed to set yourself in array against the Divine Majesty and the

The enemies of Calvin exulted in this affair, and, for once, with the appearance of reason: but their efforts injured the cause of Servetus; they endeavoured to bring him before the Council of Two Hundred, in which, however, they did not succeed.

The Council of Vienne claimed Servetus, who, being left at liberty to return to his ancient judges, preferred the chance of a more favourable judgment at Geneva, to the certainty of suffering the capital punishment pronounced against him at Vienne, where he had been condemned to be burned.

Holy Trinity; but rather have obstinately employed yourself in infecting the world with your heresies, and stinking heretical poison; a case and crime of heresy grievous and detestable, and deserving of corporal punishment. For these and other just reasons moving us, and being desirous to purge the church of God from such infection, and to cut off from it so rotten a member, having had good participation of counsel with our citizens, and having invoked the name of God that we may make a right judgment, sitting upon the tribunal of our predecessors, having God and the Holy Scriptures before our eyes, saying in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, by that definitive sentence, which we here give by this writing, you Michael Servetus, are condemned to be bound and led to Champel, and there fastened to a stake and burned alive with your book written with your hand, and printed, until your body shall be reduced to ashes, and your days thus finished as an example to others who might commit the same things; and we command you our lieutenant to put this our sentence into execution. Read by the seigneur syndic D'Arlord."

To the Council of Geneva justice ought to be done with respect to this transaction, though we may blame the principles of its jurisprudence: they neglected nothing to discover the truth: they multiplied their interrogatories; they employed all possible means to make Servetus retract; and, as they experienced the inutility of these measures, they wrote to the reformed Swiss cantons for their advice. Is it credible? they were unanimous in exhorting the council to *punish the wicked man, and to put it out of his power to increase heresy.* If Calvin may be supposed to have influenced the Council of Geneva, shall he domineer at his pleasure over four councils of four different states, and all the persons who were consulted by them in forming their judgments? Shall the fury imputed to him render so many magistrates cruel, whom he had never known? It must be confessed, that the intolerant spirit of the age dictated the sentence of Servetus at Geneva; but, it is not equally evident that Calvin was the author of that atrocity, and that he laboured with ardour to accomplish it.

On the 27th of October, Servetus was condemned to be burnt alive; and the sentence was executed on the same day.

Some general observations on the conduct of the Council, and that of Calvin, may serve to silence those persons who are disposed to fancy themselves considerable, because they have calumniated a state, and a great man.

In the first place, let it be remembered that the fate of Servetus was approved by the majority of celebrated ecclesiastics amongst the reformed of those times; and that those who are not mentioned, did not think of blaming it: it was also sanctioned by the churches of Switzerland, who even recommended it. Let it be farther remarked, that Castalio, the avowed enemy of Calvin, was the only person who had the courage to espouse the cause of Servetus, and of the heretics, in a *Dissertation*, in which it is considered, "By what right, or with what advantage, heretics may be restrained, or capitally punished." And let it be observed, he was afraid to put his name to it, though he resided at Basil, and therefore took the name of Bellius. From this circumstance it is evident, that the doctrine which he so properly defended was generally condemned by the public tribunals, and that it exposed its defenders to severe penalties.

It had long been the custom at Geneva to proceed with violence against heretics: In the year 1536, several persons were deprived of their freedom who did not embrace the received doctrine: from the year 1541, the Consistory possessed the right of forcing the magistrates and the people to continue faithful to the holy doctrine, and to observe good morals. In 1558, Gentilis escaped death only by retraction, though it was known to be feigned; and Calvin, in a letter which he wrote at that time, observed, "Servetus, by a recantation, might have averted his punishment: I would

have it attested that my hostility was not so deadly; but that by humility alone, had he not been deprived of his senses, he might have saved his life; but I know not how to account for his conduct without supposing him to have been seized with a fatal insanity, and to have plunged himself headlong into ruin."* From this fragment it appears that Servetus might have retracted; that Calvin wished him to do it; that he was grieved that the retraction was not made: it is also evident that the Council furnished him with occasions of so doing; that they descended to theological conversations, in which they endeavoured to instruct him; but he persisted in defending his opinions in a blasphemous manner; so that if Servetus was condemned, it was because he was not afraid of exposing himself to it, since he was acquainted with the existence of the laws which threatened him, and, independently of those laws, could not have been brought to trial; but, as the Council could not violate them to absolve him, neither could they change them to mitigate his punishment; these laws equally opposed the desire of the Council to commute the punishment into banishment, and the efforts of Calvin to render it less cruel.

The civil and ecclesiastical jurisprudence of

* "Mutando mentem pœnas à se avertere potuisset Servetus: hoc testatum volo me non ità capitaliter infestum quin licitum fuerit vel solâ modestiâ, nisi mente privatus foret, vitam redimere; sed nescio quod dicam, nisi fatali vesaniâ fuisse correptum, et se precipitem jaceret."

the tribunals with respect to heresy, was undoubtedly grossly inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and the principles of equity. But if we could transport ourselves into that age, and contemplate the circumstances in which Calvin was placed, divesting our minds of prejudice, we should no doubt perceive that the sentence was that of the civil judges, and that they strictly followed the ordinary course of the law; that Calvin followed the judgment of all the ecclesiastics of his time, and complied with the sanguinary laws of every country in Europe against heretics.

It cannot, however, be denied, that in this instance Calvin acted contrary to the benignant spirit of the gospel. It is better to drop a tear over the inconsistency of human nature, and to bewail those infirmities which cannot be justified. He declares that he acted conscientiously, and publicly justified the act. Cranmer acted the same part towards the poor Anabaptists in the reign of Edward VI. This doctrine they had learnt at Rome, and it is certain, that, with a very few exceptions, it was at this time the opinion of all parties.* The

* The author of the Memoirs of Literature says, "If the religion of Protestants depended on the doctrine and conduct of the Reformers, he should take care how he published his account of Servetus; but as the Protestant Religion is entirely founded on Holy Scripture, so the defaults of the Reformers ought not to have any ill influence on the reformation. The doctrine of non-toleration, which obtained in the sixteenth century, among some Protestants, was that pernicious error which they had imbibed in the Church of Rome; and, I believe, I can

apostles John and James would have called down fire from heaven; Calvin and Cranmer kindled it on earth. This, however, is the only fault alleged against Calvin; but "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone."

"It ought, however," says a sensible writer, "to be acknowledged, that persecution for religious principles was not at that time peculiar to any party of Christians, but common to all, whenever they were invested with civil power. It was a detestable error; but it was the error of the age. They looked upon heresy in the same light as we look upon those crimes which are inimical to the peace of civil society; and, accordingly, proceeded to punish heretics by the sword of the civil magistrate. If Socinians did not persecute their adversaries so much as Trinitarians, it was because they were not equally invested with the power of doing so. Mr. Lindsay acknowledges, that Faustus Socinus himself was not free from persecution in the case of Francis David, superintendant of the Unitarian Churches in Transylvania. David had disputed with Socinus on the invocation of Christ, and died

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say, without doing any injury to that church, that she is, in a great measure, answerable for the execution of Servetus. If the Roman Catholics had never put any person to death for the sake of religion, I dare say that Servetus had never been condemned to die in any Protestant city. Let us remember, that Calvin, and all the magistrates of Geneva in the year 1553, were born and bred up in the Church of Rome: this is the best apology that can be made for them."—*Biographia Evangelica*, vol. II. p. 42.

in prison in consequence of his opinion, and some offence taken at his supposed indiscreet propagation of it from the pulpit. "I wish I could say," adds Mr. Lindsay, "that Socinus, or his friend Blandrata, had done all in their power to prevent his commitment, or procure his release afterwards." The difference between Socinus and David was very slight. They both held Christ to be a mere man. The former, however, was for praying to him; which the latter, with much greater consistency, disapproved. Considering this, the persecution to which Socinus was accessary was as great as that of Calvin; and there is no reason to think, but that if David had differed as much from Socinus as Servetus did from Calvin, and if the civil magistrates had been for burning him, Socinus would have concurred with them. To this it might be added, that the conduct of Socinus was marked with disingenuity: in that he considered the opinion of David in no very heinous point of light; but was afraid of increasing the odium under which he and his party already lay, among other Christian churches.

It was the opinion, that *erroneous religious principles are punishable by the civil magistrate*, that did the mischief, whether at Geneva, in Transylvania, or in Britain; and to this, rather than to Trinitarianism, or to Unitarianism, it ought to be imputed.*

* See Calvinistic and Socinan Systems examined and compared, by Andrew Fuller, 2d edit. p. 146.

CHAP. IV.

Calvin's Intrepidity in refusing the Sacrament to Bertelier — Persecution of Farel — Calvin's Behaviour to the Persecuted Protestants — Character of Gentilis — Reflections on Intolerance — Calvin the means of founding a College.

BERTELIER, a man of an abandoned character, having been suspended from the communion of the Church, petitioned the Seigneurs to terminate his suspension. In consequence of the clamours of those who maintained that the Consistory usurped the authority of the magistrates, the Council granted him permission to communicate.

Perrin and his faction pleased themselves with the expectation that Calvin would either disobey the orders of the Seigneurs, and thus be treated as a criminal against the state; or that if he obeyed, the authority of the Consistory, which repressed their disorders, might be easily overthrown: but Calvin, having received notice of this resolution two days before the administration of the Supper, discovered the most intrepid courage on the Sunday following; when, after having preached with energy against those who despised the sacred mysteries, "I will," declared he, "imitate the example of St. Chrysostom; and, like him, rather expose myself to death, than give holy things to the pro-

fane, who have been declared unworthy to partake of the body of Jesus Christ." Wicked and unruly as were the enemies of Calvin, these words had such effect upon them, that Perrin sent some one secretly to Bertelier, to desire him not to approach the table of the Lord, and they partook of the holy mysteries in the most devout and edifying manner.

Leaving Calvin to his repose, these seditious persons turned their rage against Farel. Having visited Geneva, and thinking that his age, and the important services which he had rendered to the Church, might give him considerable authority, he censured them severely in one of his sermons. But they complained loudly that Farel had done them a serious injury, and he was no sooner returned to his church, than they procured him to be cited to Geneva, to give an account of his conduct.

Farel, in complying with this order, exposed himself to considerable danger; for the faction was extremely incensed against him, and threatened to throw him into the Rhone; but a bold and courageous young man having warned Perrin, that if Farel, the common Father of the city, suffered any ill treatment, *his* person should no longer be safe; and others well disposed having joined him, the seditious were so dismayed, that they asked pardon for their behaviour; after which Farel, having received audience, was fully justified.

This year proved, upon the whole, propitious to the church; the principal thing, however, which afflicted it was the death of Edward, King of Eng-

land, a prince of extraordinary virtue and piety, universally lamented by the whole reformed world. The troubles of Geneva did not, however, hinder Calvin from prosecuting his studies; for it was in the midst of these confusions that he composed his Commentary on St. John.

Calvin was at this time occupied with the care of the numerous strangers who had been obliged to quit England; some of whom had retired to Vezel, others to Embden, and the rest to Francfort, and who all frequently solicited his advice.

The great labours in which he was engaged for the interests of the church, appear in the number of letters which he wrote to different princes, to induce them to embrace the Reformation; and to the persecuted Protestants, to exhort them to suffer death courageously, with which they were threatened; and to others, to support their confinements and chains with constancy.

The harmony which, after much contention, prevailed on the subject of the Supper of the Lord, was now interrupted by Joachin Vestphal, who having sounded the tocsin, was followed by Heshusius, who was afterwards made a bishop. This obliged Calvin to publish a work on the subject, which, whilst it mortified his enemies, proved highly useful and acceptable to the friends of truth.

The destruction of the faction which had so long annoyed our reformer, was accelerated by the disclosure of a conspiracy against the state, made by some drunkards concerned in it; in consequence of

which, some were condemned to a capital punishment, and others quitted the city.

These troubles being appeased, Calvin was not left without occasion for the exercise of his virtue, as he took great pains to promote the establishment of the churches of Poland: and England was afflicted with a most cruel persecution, in which many persons were put to death, and amongst others, those glorious martyrs and illustrious bishops, John Hooper, Nicholas Ridley, Hugh Latimer, and Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. The afflictions of England affected him deeply: he also did his utmost to comfort his brethren who were persecuted in France, and to inspire with Christian courage the five generous martyrs who were burned at Cambray.

Matthieu Gribald, a celebrated lawyer, who had revived the opinions of Servetus at Geneva, having escaped from Tubingue, was taken at Bern, and after renouncing his heresies, in order to escape the danger which threatened him, he was no sooner set at liberty than he openly supported Gentilis, of whom an account will be given in its place. He afterwards died of the plague, which probably spared him an ignominious death.

In the neighbourhood of Geneva arose a faction composed of ministers, who were extremely bitter against Calvin, and who acted under the influence of Bolzec. These persons, though of infamous characters, thinking to acquire reputation by attacking so illustrious and formidable an adversary,

accused him of making God the author of sin. These calumnies not being new, Calvin at first despised them, but being compelled at length to justify himself, he solicited permission to repair to Bern, accompanied by envoys from the republic, and to maintain the cause of truth there. This being consented to, he acquitted himself with such complete success, that Castalio and Bolzec were banished with infamy from the territory of Bern.

Shortly after his return from Bern, he was attacked with a tertian fever, which seized him while he was preaching, and obliged him to leave the pulpit. This circumstance gave rise to many false reports, which were so acceptable to the Roman Catholics, that those of Noyon made a solemn procession, to return thanks to God for the death of Calvin. This was certainly one of the least suspicious eulogies of Calvin, and shews, the enemies themselves being judges, his importance in the cause of the Reformation. In the month of August in this year, Calvin set out for Francfort, with the design of terminating the troubles which the disputes about the Lord's Supper had given rise to there. The Council thought it necessary to send a guard with him.

The zeal of Calvin was certainly not a "zeal without innovation;" for according to a Catholic historian, "he wrote also two letters into France, to confirm those of his party in their errors, and to oblige them to separate entirely from the church; one of them directed to *Nicholas Charminius*, is

an exhortation to avoid idolatry, and the other, to *Gerard Roussel*, lately made Bishop of Oleron, is against the Popish priesthood.

"He also condemns more severely than the *Lutherans* do, the invocation of saints, the worship and use of images, vows, celibacy of priests, fasting, holy days, and the sacrifice of the mass, the adoration of the eucharist, indulgences, the sacraments, except the eucharist and baptism, and in general all the rites and ceremonies of the church, which the Lutherans had not quite taken away."*

Having returned to Geneva, though he found himself indisposed, he did not, however, remit his usual labours, but continued his Commentary on the Psalms, which he gave to the public the year following, accompanied with an admirable preface. He also undertook to defend the truth against Westphal.

Speaking of Geneva in the year 1555, *De Thou* observes, that "there was a tumult during the night, which was excited by some members of the council, who had resolved, with those of their faction, to usurp absolute authority. They could not bear John Calvin, of Noyon, who had for several years taught in their town; and they hated principally those persons who, on account of religion, had come from France to Geneva to escape persecution; they were especially indignant that a considerable proportion of them had been admitted into

* Du Pin.

the rank of citizens; from whence it followed, that in the degree in which one party was augmented, the strength of the other was diminished. They therefore made use of the following artifice in order to expel them. During the night they ran about in all directions, and began at the same time to cry aloud in different places, as if the signal had been given that the French were under arms, and that they were about to deliver up the city: but as the French kept close in their houses, the people, whom the conspirators hoped to induce to take arms, remained quiet also, and thus their artifice produced no effect.*

The news of the dreadful persecution of the Protestants in Paris deeply affected Calvin. Having assembled for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper, they were discovered, when eighty of them were seized; the greatest part of whom were imprisoned, after being charged with various injuries, and cruelly treated; amongst whom were several ladies of the first quality. The courtiers who influenced the king, had awakened his anger against the Protestants, and raised this storm against them: besides which, the state of the kingdom was unfavourable to them; for this affliction befel them soon after the French had been defeated at Saint Quintin; on which account they assembled at night, not daring to meet in the day; which gave rise to those idle tales which Democharès and their ene-

* Histoire de I. A. De Thou, tom. II. liv. xvi.

mies published against them; accusing them of the same crimes with which the Pagans endeavoured to blacken the first Christians. For besides pretending that the Protestants were the cause of all the afflictions of the state, they had procured false witnesses to testify, that after having extinguished the lamp which lighted them, they prostituted themselves to every kind of abomination: and notwithstanding the utter improbability of this report, there were not a few weak enough to give credit to it.

But the rage of their enemies did not terminate here; for twenty-one of these unhappy persons were condemned to be burnt alive. And as only seven of them were executed at a time, this dismal spectacle was exhibited to the public at three different periods. The first who suffered this cruel punishment discovered the most admirable constancy, particularly a lady of quality, and two young men.

This storm was at length appeased, either by the calumnies of their enemies being detected, or by the king's being influenced by the earnest intercession of the German ambassadors, whom Calvin had engaged to intercede for his brethren of that kingdom.

Whilst France was thus agitated, the republic of Geneva happily contracted a perpetual alliance with that of Bern, contrary to the expectations of the exiles of that city; but the joy which that alliance afforded them was damped by several un-

pleasant occurrences; for besides the re-kindling of persecution in France, the heresy of the Tritheists was at this time revived by Valentin Gentilis.

Shortly after the death of Servetus, Gentilis, a man possessed of an ardent and penetrating mind, though more subtle than solid, meeting with the work of Servetus, and Calvin's refutation of it, easily perceived that neither the ideas nor the specious reasonings of Servetus to cover the heresy of Paul of Samosata; nor the confusion of persons in the Trinity taught by Sabellius; nor the sentiments of Arius, respecting the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, could be made to harmonize with the word of God. Perceiving farther, that what the Scriptures teach with regard to three persons in one essence, is above our conceptions; instead of submitting to the wisdom of God, he endeavoured to persuade himself that every truth must be necessarily intelligible. Having, therefore, attributed the principal authority, and as it were the monarchy, to the person of the Father, whom he called the only sovereign and independent God; he considered the essence of the divinity to be communicated to the other persons, in such a manner as to make not only three persons, but three distinct essences; that is to say, three Gods eternal, almighty, and immense. To maintain this heresy, he perverted the Scriptures, and the authority of the Council of Nice, of Ignatius, Tertullian, Ireneus, and Lactantius; and rejected all the orthodox di-

vines who have embraced the doctrine of the Council of Nice.

At first he proposed his opinion privately, and amongst other persons, to Jean Paul Alciat Milanois, and to Georges Blandrata, a physician, professing only to examine the reasons which might support, and those which might overthrow it. But the Consistory of the Italian church, having been informed that this sentiment was spreading throughout the town, convoked an extraordinary assembly, at which, in the presence of a certain number of seigneurs chosen for the occasion, and of all the ministers and elders, the reasons alleged in support of that doctrine were refuted by Calvin; this conference induced all the Italians to sign the orthodox doctrine, with the exception of six, who shortly afterwards, at the solicitation of their friends, signed it also, although they did not approve of it, which soon became evident. Valentin Gentilis at first refused to subscribe to the proposed formulary: he, however, complied afterwards, but continued to dogmatize against the received doctrine, on which account he was committed to prison, where he held a dispute with Calvin, on the 15th of July. Being convicted of perjury, and of voluntary heresy, he was condemned to be beheaded. Having, however, abjured his heresies, his sentence was commuted for an ignominious punishment, to which he submitted on the 2d of September.

When it is considered that the right of private judgment was the leading principle implied and

acted upon in the Reformation, it is scarcely possible to read these repeated instances of intolerance without regretting the inconsistency of the Protestant churches. No privilege appears to have been more variously contested than that of the right of private judgment; a privilege, founded in the nature and responsible circumstances of man, and recognized by the impartial spirit and high authority of Christianity. But the individual right, as well as the right of communities, is frequently claimed and acted upon by those who are prepared to resist the same claim when asserted by others, whom interest makes it convenient to oppose. To say that the reformers possessed this right, and were justified in employing it in the establishment of the Reformation, and that their Protestant brethren were not entitled to the same privilege, is an assumption which no friend to religious liberty can consistently allow. It is true that the Reformation had chiefly to do with the worship and discipline of the church, though not exclusively; and that the heresies of the Protestants were doctrinal; but if the right of private judgment be allowed in one instance, it must be admitted in all; since the New Testament knows of no limitation or exception, but considers every man as exclusively responsible to God, and rests the right and the exercise of it upon that responsibility. In unison with which principle, we must understand the words, "*One is your master, even Christ.*" If there could possibly be any difference

with respect to the importance of the exercise of the right, it must apply to doctrinal subjects, which on account of their extensive importance, require the utmost freedom of investigation, and the most unbiassed determination; but though the application of the right is in these circumstances pre-eminently important, the right itself is independent of any considerations of a comparative nature. The denial of the exercise of this rational and Christian right, seconded by influence sufficient to prevent it, would necessarily have the effect of throwing us back again into the darkness and barbarity of the middle ages. With the Papists, an opposition to this privilege was part of a policy by which a corrupt hierarchy was long supported. This principle, enforced by secular authority and superstitious awe, would have rendered the Reformation impossible. A slight acquaintance with the history of persecution might be sufficient to teach its abettors not only its incompetency to enforce conviction, but its uniform tendency to strengthen opposition, and confirm prejudices. But it should seem that there is connected with the act of persecution a certain undefinable pleasure, which is at once the luxury and reproach of a bigoted and malignant mind. The real ground of persecution, whatever specious forms it may assume, is the native depravity of human nature; in decidedly wicked characters, it selects for its object vital Christianity; but where it unhappily obtains amongst religious persons, it must certainly be ascribed to ill-regu-

lated zeal, and a mistaken apprehension of the genius of Christianity.

Calvin, being convinced that the best method to preserve the purity of religion was to enlighten men's understandings, used his utmost exertions to found a college, in which youth might be well instructed. In the year 1556, he proposed the establishment of one; but foreign affairs prevented the Council from attending to the object at that time. At length, in the year 1559, he had the satisfaction of seeing his wishes accomplished; a college being founded, and furnished with enlightened teachers: an academy was also erected, which acquired the esteem of foreigners by the celebrity of its professors.

Some authors have asserted that the academy was founded by Charles IV.—a circumstance in the highest degree improbable, since it does not possess the power of conferring degrees. *La Fay* speaks thus of it in his life of Beza:—"A while after I was called (saith he) to the ministry of the church, in the room of Claudius Pontus, or *du Pont*, a very good man, and most faithful pastor in the church of Geneva, who from this transitory life had been called to that which is eternal, and withal was joined to Calvin in the professorship of divinity: and that very year was made the first Rector of the University, on the 5th of June 1559, when for the first and lucky time were read the laws of the university in a fine company of grave and learned persons. He pronounced then a most

excellent oration concerning the usefulness of learning, partly to encourage the scholars, and partly to confirm the magnificent Lords of Geneva to prosecute this so noble and laudable work begun by them: for although the city of Geneva was then almost drowned by an infinite number of difficulties both within and without, yet, by the persuasion of Mr. Calvin, a great personage, and of whom it is impossible to say too much good, they were encouraged to think effectually of building a public college, and setting up a school, an ornament which the town had wanted till then, Calvin only teaching a few hearers before: so after they had built a very handsome, convenient, and spacious college, and after they had appointed an honourable salary for the professors of singular learning, the school of Geneva became famous and useful."*

* The Church History of Geneva. By the Rev. Mr. Andrew Le Mercier, 1732.

CHAP. V.

Calvin presented with the Freedom of the City of Geneva—Revises and republishes his Institutes in Latin and in French—Replies to several Heretics—Though greatly afflicted by Disease, is unremitting in his Exertions—Is carried to the Church and receives the Sacrament from the Hands of Beza.

IT is difficult to conceive that it was only in this year, 1559, that Calvin was presented with the freedom of the city. No citizen, however, had ever earned so well this honourable title as he had done by his services.

Calvin was this year attacked with a quartan ague, which laid the foundation of his subsequent illness and death; for though he recovered his health eight months afterwards, he was so much reduced as never again to be perfectly restored.

During his illness, though his physicians and his friends conjured him to be careful of his health, and to remit his usual labours, he continued to dictate and to write several letters. And though so continually occupied that he could not fulfil all the duties of his charge, he used to remark that idleness was extremely irksome to him. It was at this time, however, that he revised and republished his Institutes, in Latin and in French; and corrected

his Commentary on Isaiah, in such a manner as to render it a new work.

At this period, two of the most powerful monarchs of Europe terminated their differences by an alliance. This peace would probably have been fatal to the Protestant churches, had not a divine Providence counteracted the designs of the Catholics, who had obtained an entire influence over Henry II. and who abused his compliance to excite a persecution against the Protestants. With this view they induced that prince to publish several severe edicts against them, and to imprison some of the counsellors of the parliament of Paris, who were suspected of favouring their cause; and inspired him with the design of destroying the *New Sect*,—a name by which they were then called.

But while the church was overwhelmed with consternation, and engaged in imploring divine succour with all imaginable ardour, Henry II. was mortally wounded at a tournament, by one of his captains of the guards; who, by his orders, had a few days before arrested the counsellors; this event changing the face of affairs, the reformed were delivered from a danger which appeared inevitable.

After the death of Henry II. Calvin was accused of having raised a conspiracy against Francis II. although he had disapproved of the enterprise, and employed his efforts to subdue it.

Stancarus of Mantoüan began at this time to

teach, that Jesus Christ was mediator only with respect to his humanity, accusing those of Arianism, who thought him mediator in respect of his divinity, and asserting that they made the Son less than the Father. Melancthon and Martyr wrote against this sentiment, and Calvin refuted it; briefly foreseeing at the same time, what afterwards happened, that to avoid the errors of Stancarus, many persons would be in danger of falling into those of the Tritheists; he, therefore, expressly cautioned them to be upon their guard with respect to Blandrata and his party, and instructed them to maintain that Jesus Christ was mediator according to both his natures, without multiplying the divinity.

The Vaudois of Bohemia having deputed two persons to wait upon Calvin, to ask his advice on several points of religion, he received them with great affability, answered all their questions, and exhorted them earnestly to join the reformed churches.

After the death of Francis II. Charles IX. wrote, in 1561, to the Council of Geneva, to complain of their receiving into the town the enemies of France, and fostering those public disturbers. Calvin was accordingly summoned, with his colleagues, before the Council; and admitted that the pastors had sent into France several pious men, to regulate the churches there, which they had been solicited to do; but that they were too deeply occupied about the advancement of religion to be employed in sowing troubles in the kingdom; and that he was ready,

with his colleagues, to answer their accusers before the king. Charles acknowledged apparently the innocence of Calvin and his colleagues; for nothing farther was heard upon the subject.

Soon afterwards, Calvin replied to Tileman Heshusius; and published a work shewing the blasphemies with which the work of Gentilis, against the Creed of Athanasius, was filled. He also published at this time his work on Daniel, which he dedicated to the churches of France; and while in his Commentary he appears the interpreter of the prophet, in his dedicatory epistle he appears himself almost a prophet, predicting the tempests which were shortly to arise, though the conference then held at Poissy gave reason to expect the entire destruction of the Catholic religion.

The disputes in which Calvin was interested were not yet finished: in 1561, a fresh discussion arose between him and Baldwin, who had published, during the conference of Poissy, a book of Cassander's, under the title, *De Officio pii ac publicæ Tranquillitatis vere amantis in hoc Religionis Studio.* To this work Calvin replied; a controversy ensued, in the course of which a warmth of temper was betrayed on both sides, which reflected no honour on the disputants, but which is far from being singular in theological controversies.

Calvin was at this time exceedingly afflicted by the state of the Protestants in France; for after having obtained an edict, which put an end to the

sufferings to which they had been long exposed, and which granted them the free exercise of their religion, the artifices of their enemies succeeded in withdrawing the King of Navarre from the Protestant interest, and the Duc de Guise had made a cruel slaughter in Vassi, and had begun a civil war which long desolated that kingdom.

His disorders were now visibly increasing daily, and it was evident that he was making rapid advances towards a better world. His afflictions, however weighty, never dejected him. His usual duties of visiting the sick and afflicted, of preaching, and giving theological lectures, were punctually discharged; and knowing that the churches of France were not only openly attacked, but secretly defamed to the German princes, he drew up their confession of faith, which was presented to the Diet of Francfort.

On the 19th of December, Calvin, being confined to his bed with the gout, and the wind having been unusually high for two days, made use of the following expressions to some friends present: "I have thought I heard an alarming noise all night, and I could not help thinking that it was occasioned by a great number of drums. I cannot understand it. We shall certainly soon hear of some important event. Let us beseech God to have pity upon his church." This was thought very remarkable, when soon after, by news brought from France, it appeared that on the same day a bloody battle was fought between the king's army, and that of the Prince of Condé.

The disorders of Calvin, which were now rapidly on the increase, rendered his exertions at this period almost incredible; for notwithstanding his reduced state, he could never be induced to remit, in the slightest degree, his ordinary occupations. If at any time his weakness prevented his attendance upon his public duties, he never failed to dictate or write a great variety of letters, in answer to persons who consulted him from various parts of Europe. Amongst his numerous avocations at this period, were the exhortations which he gave on the subject of the Holy Trinity; his answers to the deputies of the Synod of Lyons; the Commentaries which he composed in French and in Latin, upon the Books of Moses; as well as his Commentary upon the Book of Joshua, which he began this year, and finished a little before his death.

The year 1564, when he entered on his eternal felicity, occasioned a deep and lasting grief to Geneva. On the second of February he delivered his last sermon, and on the same day, his last theological lecture. His asthma depriving him of the use of his voice, he abstained from all the functions of his charge. He was indeed sometimes carried to the congregation, but seldom spoke.

In a letter which he wrote to the physicians of Montpellier, he gave an account of the maladies which his various labours of body and of mind had brought upon him. For, besides being of a dry and feeble temperament, and strongly inclined to consumption, he slept very unsoundly. During ten

years at least he ate no dinner, taking no nourishment until supper-time. He was subject to a headach, the only remedy for which was fasting; on account of which he remained sometimes thirty-six hours without eating. He was also frequently attacked by the hemorrhoides, which were brought on partly by his efforts in preaching, and partly by the excessive use of aloes; and five years before his death he was seized with a spitting of blood. He was no sooner cured of the quartan ague, than he was attacked by the gout; he was afterwards afflicted with the cholic, and a few months before his death, with the stone. The physicians exhausted their art upon him, and no man ever observed their instructions with more regularity. But as to what relates to the labours of the mind, he had so little respect to his health, that the most violent headachs never prevented his appearance in the pulpit in his turn.

Afflicted, however, as he was by so many maladies, he was never known to pronounce a word unworthy of a Christian, or even of a man of constancy and courage. In his greatest agonies, lifting his eyes to heaven, he was accustomed only to repeat the words, "How long, O Lord!" When in health, he frequently made use of these words, with reference to the calamities of his brethren in Jesus Christ, whose afflictions were much more painful to him than his own. When importuned not to dictate or write, during his illness, "Would you," said he, "that when the Lord comes, he should surprise me in idleness?"

On the 10th of March, being dressed and seated before the table at which he was accustomed to write, he was visited by Beza and other friends: upon seeing them, he leaned his head upon one of his hands, apparently meditating, and addressed them in a low voice, but with a cheerful and open countenance; saying, "I return you my thanks, my very dear brethren, for all the care you take of me; I hope you will soon be relieved from it, and that in a fortnight I shall assist in your assembly for the last time: for I think that after that time, the Lord will remove me from this world, and raise me to his Paradise."

On the 24th of March, he assisted at the Assembly as he had predicted; and when it was concluded, he remarked, that God had given him some respite; and having taken up the New Testament, he read some of the marginal annotations, and asked his colleagues their opinions on what he had read; for he had undertaken the revision and correction of those notes.

Being fatigued with the exertions of the day, he was worse on the morrow. On the 27th, being carried to the Council, he walked, supported by two men, to the hall in which the seigneurs were assembled; where, being uncovered, he thanked them for all the favours which he had received from them, and particularly for the proofs of affection which they had shewn him in his last illness; "For I feel," said he, "that I shall not again have the honour of appearing in this place." Having

with much difficulty made this speech, he took his leave of them weeping.

Though extremely reduced, he was carried to the church, on the second of April, when he heard the whole of the sermon, and received, from the hands of Beza, the Lord's Supper; and feeble as was his voice, he joined in singing the psalms. His countenance was so cheerful and serene, that the congregation were delighted with the sight of their pastor's great joy, and entire resignation.

It is not easy to conceive a more interesting scene: on the one hand an illustrious reformer and venerable pastor, anticipating the resplendent crown of righteousness awaiting him; and though willing to abide in his earthly tabernacle for the sake of his beloved flock, having also a desire to depart and to be with Christ:—on the other hand, a devoted people, grateful to their spiritual benefactor, for his laborious exertions and edifying example; willing to resign him to the society of the blessed above, and thankful for his apparent meetness for it.

CHAP. VI.

Calvin's Will — His farewell Address to the Syndics — His Composure in the Prospect of Death — His Death — Burial — Epigram, and Character.

THE will of the Genevan Reformer, made on the 25th of April, and which contains an epitome of his sentiments and experience, cannot fail to be interesting to the Reader, and is here inserted verbatim.

THE WILL OF JOHN CALVIN.

"In the name of God. To all whom it may concern; be it known that in the year 1564, and on the 25th day of the month of April, I, Pierre Chenelat, citizen and sworn notary of Geneva, having been called in by John Calvin, minister of the word of God, in the church of Geneva, and citizen of the said Geneva; who, being indisposed in body, but of sound and disposing mind, hath declared to me his wish to make his last will and testament; desiring me to write what he should dictate and pronounce; which at his said request I have done, and written what he hath dictated to me, and pronounced word by word, without omitting or adding any thing thereto, according to what followeth.——In the name of God, I, John

Calvin, minister of the word of God, in the church of Geneva, finding myself so much reduced by various maladies, that I cannot but think that God will shortly remove me out of this world, have ordered to be made and written my testament, and declaration of my last will, in form and manner following:

"First, I give thanks to God, that, taking pity on me, whom he hath created and placed in this world, he hath delivered me out of the thick darkness of idolatry, into which I was plunged; and hath brought me into the light of his gospel, and made me a partaker of the doctrine of salvation, whereof I was most unworthy. And he hath not only gently and graciously borne with my faults and sins, for which I deserved to be rejected of him and cast out, but hath vouchsafed to use my labours in preaching and publishing the truth of his gospel. And I declare it is my wish and intention to continue in the same faith and religion, having no other hope or refuge but in his gratuitous adoption of me, upon which is founded all my salvation: embracing the grace which he has given me in Jesus Christ, and accepting the merit of his death and passion, that so all my sins may be buried; and beseeching him so to wash and cleanse me in the blood of that great Redeemer which was shed for all poor sinners, that in his image I may appear before his face. I declare also, that, according to the measure of grace bestowed upon me, I have endeavoured to teach his word in its

purity, as well in sermons as in writings, and endeavoured faithfully to expound the Holy Scriptures: and that in all the disputes which I have had with the enemies of truth, I have never used either craftiness or sophistry, but have fairly maintained the truth. But alas! my zeal, if it deserve the name, has been so cold and unworthy, that I feel myself highly indebted in all, and through all: and if it were not for his infinite bounty, all the zeal I have discovered would appear light as smoke, and the graces which he has bestowed upon me would only render me more guilty; so that my only refuge is, that He being the Father of mercy, I trust he will be and appear the Father of so miserable a sinner. Further, I desire that my body, after my decease, may be interred in the customary manner, awaiting the day of a blessed resurrection. With respect to the property which God hath given me to dispose of, I name and appoint as my only heir, my well-beloved brother Antony Calvin; nominally leaving to him only the cup which I received from Monsieur de Varennes, begging him to be content therewith, which I am persuaded he will be; knowing that I have no other motive than that what little I leave may descend to his children. Further, I leave to the college ten crowns, and to the purse for poor strangers, the same sum. Also to Jane, daughter of Charles Castan, and of my half sister on the paternal side, the sum of ten crowns. Further, to Samuel and to John, sons of my said brother, my nephews, each

forty crowns. And to my nieces, Ann, Susanna, and Dorothy, each thirty crowns. As to my nephew David, as he hath proved but light and trifling, I bequeath to him only twenty crowns, for chastisement. This is in sum, all the property which God hath given me, as far as I am able to ascertain it, in books, furniture, and other things. Should it, however, prove more, I desire it may be distributed between my nephews and nieces aforesaid, not excluding my nephew David, should God give him grace to be more circumspect. But, I believe that with respect to this, there will be no difficulty, especially when my debts are paid, which I have given in charge to my brother, upon whom I can depend; naming him executor of this testament, with Laurent de Normandie, giving them full power and authority to make an inventory of, and to sell my goods, to procure money, in order to comply with the contents hereof. Dated this 25th of April, 1564. So be it.

"JOHN CALVIN."

"On the morrow, being the 26th day of April 1564, the said John Calvin did also direct me to assemble Theodore de Beza, Raymond Chauvet, Michael Cop, Louis Enoch, Nicholas Colladon, Jacques de Bordes, ministers of the word of God in this church, and also Henry Scringer, professor of arts, all citizens of Geneva, in the presence of whom he hath declared, that he desired me to write, from his words, the said will in the form and words

above: desiring me to read it in his presence, and that of the said witnesses, which I have also done word by word. This being done, he hath declared this to be his last will and testament, desiring that it might be faithfully observed. In further approbation of which, he hath requested the aforenamed witnesses to subscribe it with me; which hath also been done on the day and year aforesaid, at Geneva, in the street called the Canons, in his own house. In proof of which, I have affixed the common seal of our highly honoured seigneurs and superiors, and my seal manuel as customary.

(Signed) "P. CHENELAT."

"It was thus that Calvin, when the shades of death began to thicken around him, bequeathed to mankind the last expressions of his reliance on Jesus Christ for everlasting salvation. It deserves consideration, that in this his dying confession of faith are to be discovered no traces of any doctrinal system, but such as is common to all devout members of the Protestant church. He ascribes his salvation simply to gratuitous mercy through the cross of Christ; and what is worthy of remark, by such as are familiar with his name only as designating a controversy, he unequivocally speaks of the shedding of our Saviour's blood "for all poor sinners" in common with himself. Had his death-bed been surrounded by persons hostile to the peculiar creed which is designated by his name, some plausible suspicion might have arisen

that the commencement of his last will, in obedience to their persuasions or arguments, was in fact a recantation of earlier opinions; but in reality, he died in the midst of a circle formed by himself, and unreservedly devoted to his person and theology. We see, therefore, that when he was delivering his final sentiments, such delivery was in the highest sense his own act and deed. No opponent was present to suggest doubts; and on the other hand, as his attendant friends were entirely of his own school, *their* advice, whether asked for or offered, would in either case have imparted the colouring of their master's system to his last written act of faith.—It is a subject of religious exultation to serious minds, that there is unquestionably a point where really pious individuals, attached to creeds and communities very widely separated, will always practically meet. It is an unity not of a few correct opinions held in common, but an unity of spirit growing out of an unity of faith in Christ crucified."*

Having made his will, Calvin signified to the four syndics his wish to address them once more in their assembly, to which he hoped to be carried on the morrow. But they informed him that they would visit him, and conjured him to be careful of his health. The next day, being all present at his house, after the usual compliments, and Calvin

* Christian Observer. Review of "Life and Institutes of Calvin," by Mackenzie and Allen.

having told them that he had long wished to address them, and to express the last proof of his affection for them, and his attachment to the interests of the State, but that he had not been willing to do it until he was assured of the near approach of death;—"I thank you," said he, "my highly honoured seigneurs, for all the honours you have done me, however unworthy I have been of them; and for the proofs of affection which you have given me, bearing with my weaknesses, and my deficiencies, with long patience. And though in the duties of my charge I have been exposed to various struggles, and have endured numerous attacks, I know that these things have not happened by your fault, but by the secret orders of Divine Providence, who exposes his children to various tribulations. But, because I have not acquitted myself of my duty as I ought to have done, I earnestly entreat you to consider not so much what I have done, as what I intended to do. For I can declare with sincerity, that I have felt a deep concern in the interests of your republic, and that if I have not discharged all the duties of my charge, I have at least used my utmost endeavours to promote the welfare of the public.

"If I were not indeed to acknowledge that the Lord has made use of my ministry for the good of his church, and that by the help of heaven, my labours have not been useless to you, you might with justice accuse me of dissimulation. But as I am convinced that what I have done is trifling,

compared to what the Lord required of me, I beseech you earnestly to excuse my faults and my short-comings.

"I thank you, however, for the indulgence which you have shewn me, in bearing with mildness and with charity all my transports of anger, which I hope God will pardon, as well as all my other sins. Finally, I declare before God, that I have not rashly or without due conviction, taught you the doctrine which you have heard from me; but that I have purely and sincerely preached to you the word of God, according to the charge which he hath given me of it. And as I should have provoked his anger, if I had acted otherwise, so I am persuaded that my labours, and the pains which I have taken to instruct you, have not been displeasing to him. And I make this declaration before God, and in your presence, so much the more willingly, as I do not doubt that Satan, after his usual manner, will raise up many light, wicked, and ambitious spirits, to corrupt and change the pure doctrine which I have published to you."

Having represented to them the infinite blessings with which God had loaded them; "There is no one," added he, "who can better than myself inform you from how many dangers the powerful and merciful hand of the Lord hath delivered you. You see the happy state in which you now are. Whether, therefore, you are in prosperity or in adversity, keep this truth constantly in view, that it is God alone who preserves cities and kingdoms,

and that he requires homage from them, in acknowledgment that they depend entirely upon himself. Remember that David, that illustrious king, confesses that at a time when he enjoyed a profound peace, he experienced so dangerous a fall, from which he would never have arisen, if the Lord by a singular favour had not stretched out his hand. What ought not weak and infirm men, therefore, to fear, since so powerful and pious a prince has fallen?

"You must, therefore, humble yourselves exceedingly before God, if you desire that he would give you grace to live in his fear, and to put your whole trust in his all-sufficient help. Conducting yourselves thus, you may be persuaded that you will experience his protection, as you have done hitherto, and that you will remain firm and unshaken, although your salvation hangs upon a slender thread. If, therefore, the Lord prosper your designs, be careful that you do not exalt yourselves like the profane, but with deep submission render unto him the humblest thanks for all the good he is doing for you. And when you find yourselves in adversity, when even death shall surround you on all sides, fail not to hope in Him who has power to raise the dead; and consider that God only smites you to excite your zeal, and to teach you to hope in him alone.

"If, however, you are anxious that God would preserve you in the happy state in which you now are, be careful not to defile by your vices the ho-

liness of the church in which he hath placed you; for he is the only Sovereign God, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who loads with good things, and with honours, those who honour him; but who abases and covers with contempt those who despise him. Serve him, therefore, according to the precepts which he hath given you; have nothing so much at heart as to obey his divine will, and seek daily to acquire some new degree of virtue and of perfection: for whilst we are in this world we can never accomplish all the duties which God hath enjoined upon us. I know the morals, and the inclinations of each of you, and I know that you stand in need of exhortation; no man is so perfect as not to have many faults. Examine yourselves, therefore, carefully, and ask of God those qualities and virtues which you yet need.

"We all know what vices reign in the assemblies of those who govern the states: some, neglecting the public good, mind only their private interests; others are only anxious to gratify their passions: some make a bad use of the gifts of Heaven; while others, filled with vanity and a good opinion of themselves, wish to impose their advice upon all the world.

"I conjure the aged not to envy young persons the graces with which God hath adorned them; and the young to discover in their whole conduct great modesty and humility. Be not discouraged, neither trouble one another. Avoid all kinds of

animosities and bitterness. For nothing is more likely to prevent the execution of designs for the public good.

"To be defended from all these evils, each one must be satisfied with the condition in which he is placed, and all acquit themselves generally with fidelity in the employment committed to them. I entreat you also to be careful, that neither favour nor hatred have any influence upon your judgments in civil processes; and to take care that neither fraud, solicitations, nor any other oblique means have any influence against right and just reason. Should you be tempted to support the bad cause through interest, resist it vigorously; considering him who hath raised you to this dignity, and asking of him the succours of his Holy Spirit. Finally, as I have been the subject of many weaknesses and imperfections, which I confess before God, and before his holy angels, and before you, highly honoured seigneurs, I once more beseech you to excuse and pardon them."

Having finished this discourse, he besought God to load them with his favours, and to conduct them by his Holy Spirit, for the advantage of the republic; and having shaken hands with them all, bade them farewell; the seigneurs, who considered him their common father, could not separate from him without tears, or without discovering the deepest distress.

On the 28th of April, all the ministers of the town, and those of the country, being assembled in

his room, according to his desire, he addressed them in the following discourse:—"I exhort you, my brethren, to discover after my death the same zeal in the exercise of your charge, which you have hitherto shewn, and never to lose courage: being persuaded that the Lord will defend this church and this republic from all the dangers with which they are threatened. Suffer not divisions and enmities ever to destroy that mutual charity which ought to reign amongst you. Think continually of what you owe to the flocks of which you are the pastors; and let nothing separate you from them. I know that those who wish to desert them will not want pretexts to colour their infidelity; but a fatal experience will one day convince them, that the Lord cannot be mocked.

"When I first arrived in this city, the gospel was indeed preached; but disorder and confusion were so universal, that every body made Christianity to consist in the overthrow of the laws; and I suffered many indignities from several base persons, whose insolence I endeavoured to repress. However, though naturally extremely timid, God banished from my heart all fear, and gave me so firm and intrepid a courage, that I resisted all the attempts of the wicked, and was invincible to all their attacks.

"When I returned from Strasbourg, I confess it was with extreme reluctance that I yielded to the earnest prayers of this church; because I thought that all my cares would produce no fruit: for I

was ignorant of the designs of Divine Providence; and I perceived that I was engaging in an enterprise full of difficulties, which to me appeared insurmountable. But, having begun this holy work, and continuing to apply to it all my exertions, I found at length, that God poured his benedictions upon my labour.

"Persist then constantly in the vocation with which you are called; preserve the order and the rules which are observed in this church: do all that depends upon you to retain this people in their duty; for you are not ignorant of the great number of the wicked and the rebellious. You perceive that this church is not now in a low condition; and you will draw upon yourselves the judgments of God, if it should ever be destroyed by your negligence. Finally, I declare to you, my brethren, that I have always been united to you by a sincere friendship; that if during this affliction you have felt any effects of my grief, I entreat your pardon, and return you a thousand thanks for having borne with my defects so long a time."

Calvin having been informed by a letter from Farel, that, though he was eighty-four years of age, and loaded with infirmities, he had resolved to visit him; replied, "I wish you perfect health, my very dear brother; and since God intends you should remain in this world after me, remember ever our union, which hath produced so many advantages to the church, and the fruit of which we shall gather in heaven.

"I beg, however, that you would not on my account expose yourself to the fatigue of a journey. My respiration is difficult, and I am about to breathe the last gasp, happy to live and die in Jesus Christ, who is gain to all his children in life and in death; I bid you, and all my brethren, my last adieu.—Wholly yours,

JOHN CALVIN.

"*At Geneva, May* 2, 1564."

This letter did not, however, prevent the venerable old man from paying his last attentions to Calvin: after having seen and conversed with him, he returned the next day to Neufchatel.

From this time to the period of his death, he was incessantly employed in prayer to God. It was, indeed, in a low voice, interrupted by a shortness of breath, with which he was oppressed; but his sparkling eyes, constantly directed towards heaven, and the serenity of his countenance, discovered the ardour of his petitions, and his confidence in the mercy of God. In his most violent pains he frequently repeated those words of David; "I was dumb, Lord, because thou didst it." And sometimes those of Isaiah; "I mourn like the dove." And frequently, lifting up his heart to God, he would exclaim, "Lord, thou bruisest me, but I suffer with patience, since it is thy hand that hath done it."

To admit all the persons who wished to express their regret at the prospect of losing him, the door

of his chamber must have been open night and day. But as he spoke with difficulty, he requested that his friends would be contented to pray to God for him, and spare themselves the trouble of visiting him. On being visited by his intimate and highly valued friend Beza, he informed him, that he made it a matter of conscience not to divert him in the smallest degree from the duties of his charge, so much had he the interests of the church, and the glory of God, at heart. In this state he continued until the 19th of May, exhibiting a perfect resignation, and comforting his friends. And, as on this day they were accustomed to partake of a meal together, in token of their intimate friendship, he was anxious that they should sup in the hall of his house; and being carried thither from his chamber, he made use of these words on entering: "I am come to see you, my brethren, and to seat myself at table with you for the last time." He then offered up the usual prayer, ate a little, and discoursed in a manner worthy of his piety, and of his zeal; and when his weakness obliged him to retire to his chamber, looking at the company with a smile, "This wall," said he, "will not prevent my being united with you in spirit."

What he had predicted, happened; for until this day, however weak, he had never failed to rise, and to be placed before his table. But after this night he remained confined to his bed, so thin and exhausted, that breath only remained, though his face was not much altered.

On the day of his death, which was the 24th of May, he appeared to speak with less difficulty, and more strength. But it was the last effort of nature. About eight o'clock in the evening, the signs of death appeared suddenly in his face; he continued speaking, however, with great propriety, until his last breath, when he appeared rather to fall asleep than die.

Thus was this great light of the Protestant church extinguished. On the day following, the whole city was plunged into the most inconceivable grief; for the republic regretted the wisest of its citizens; the church its faithful pastor; the school its incomparable master; and all bewailed their common father, the source of their joy and consolation. Many ran in crowds to his room, and could scarcely be persuaded to separate themselves from his body. There were also several strangers, and amongst them, the ambassador of England, whom the reputation of this great man had drawn to Geneva; who, not having been able to see him living, earnestly entreated to see his remains. Their request was immediately complied with.

Calvin, after having been concerned in the establishment of many churches in France, Germany, England, and Poland, and having committed his flock, as well as pupils, to his friend and disciple Theodore Beza, closed his indefatigable career; and left behind him in the city which had been the principal theatre of his exertions, a reputation for piety, learning, and wisdom, which has fallen to

the lot of scarcely any among his fellow labourers."*

The following testimony of the celebrated *De Thou*, a Catholic historian, does equal honour to the subject of these Memoirs, and to himself:— "John Calvin, of Noyon in Vermandois, a man of a lively and ardent spirit, of astonishing eloquence, and who passed for a most profound Theologian amongst the Protestants, died on the 24th of May, after having endured for seven years various afflictive disorders, which however did not hinder him from discharging the functions of his ministry, from labouring and from writing. He died of an asthma, at Geneva, where he had taught twenty years, not having attained his fifty-sixth year."†

On the day following that of his death, which was Sunday, about eight o'clock in the morning, his body was covered and enclosed in a wooden coffin; and at two o'clock in the afternoon he was conveyed, without any pomp, to the common burying place, called Plein Palais. All the seigneurs, ministers, and professors, and almost all the inhabitants of the town, attended at the funeral ceremony with expressions of the deepest grief. No inscription was put upon his tomb, because he had expressly forbidden it; but the following elegant and appropriate epigram was written by his friend Beza:

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* The History of the Helvetic Confederacy, by Joseph Planter, Esq. F. R. S.

† Histoire de I. A. De Thou, liv. xxxvi.

" Romæ ruentis terror ille maximus,
Quem mortuum lugent boni, horrescunt mali
Ipsa a quo potuit virtutem discere virtus,
Cur adeò exiguo ignotoque in cespite clausus,
Calvinus lateat, rogas?
Calvinum assidue comitata modestia, vivum,
Hoc tumulo manibus condidit ipsa suis.
O te beatum cespitem tanto hospite!
O cui invidere cuncta possint marmora!"

Shall honour'd Calvin to the dust return,
From whom e'en Virtue's self might virtue learn;
Shall he,—of falling Rome the greatest dread,
By all the good bewail'd, and now (tho' dead)
The terror of the vile,—lie in so mean,
So small a tomb, where not his Name is seen?
Sweet Modesty, who still by Calvin's side
Walk'd while he liv'd, here laid him when he died.
O happy tomb with such a tenant grac'd!
O envied marble o'er *his* ashes plac'd!

Calvin was fifty-four years old when he died, half of which time he spent in the labours of the ministry. He was of the middle size, a pale face, brown complexion, and brilliant eyes, which announced the penetration and vivacity of his mind. Neat and modest in his habits, as well as moderate in his eating, he had no less horror of luxury than of impurity. He ate, indeed, so little, that during several years he partook of only one meal a day, on account of the weakness of his stomach. He

slept but little. His memory was so tenacious, that he remembered persons whom he had only seen once, after the lapse of a considerable time; nor did he ever forget the smallest thing connected with his charge, though oppressed with innumerable occupations. Whilst he was engaged in composing any work, though interrupted by important duties for several hours, he would resume his work, without reading again what he had already written. He was so prudent and judicious, that no person ever repented having followed his advice. Though his manners were grave and serious, his conversation was remarkably sweet and interesting. He bore with the defects of others with admirable prudence; for, as on the one hand he never oppressed the consciences of weak persons with terror, or threw them into confusion by censures too severe; so, on the other hand, he never encouraged sinners in their vices, by excusing or flattering them. A friend to truth, sincerity, and candour, especially in religious concerns, he was the declared enemy of dissimulation and obstinacy.

Being of a bilious habit, he was easily excited to choler, a susceptibility considerably increased by a studious and laborious life. He had, however, learned to moderate it so effectually, that he never used any expressions unworthy of a pious man: nor was any thing capable of moving him but the conduct of rebellious and undisciplined persons.

No person could be more disinterested than Calvin; his goods, his books, and his money, did not produce the sum of one hundred and twenty-five crowns; he, however, refused, during his sickness, twenty-five crowns, which the Council wished to present him with; as well as the share of emoluments due to him: he thought he ought not to receive them, because he was incapable of fulfilling the duties of his appointments.

Calvin gave many proofs of his attachment to Geneva; his life, principally devoted to the good of that republic, was a perpetual demonstration of it; but he furnished a peculiar and striking instance of it in the month of May 1559, when a siege was apprehended; every body worked in repairing the fortifications of the town: the professors of the academy, the pastors, as well as literary characters, after the example of Calvin, undertook to complete one of the bastions of the place.

Though Calvin was sufficiently attached to his own opinions, he respected those of others; and though fixed in his sentiments, he knew how to esteem and commend those who did not hold, and even those who condemned them. It is well known that he was thoroughly decided on predestination, grace, and the sacraments; he, however, translated into French, the *Sum of Theology*, by Melancthon, in 1546, and had it republished in 1551. Yet Melancthon was considerably more reserved than Calvin on the first article; and called absolution a sacrament. Calvin, notwithstanding, wrote a pre-

face for that work, and acknowledged in it, that Melancthon had said all that was necessary to salvation, and that he had only omitted what persons may be ignorant of without danger; he even described with energy the disputes so ill managed on those subjects; saying, that "they were perplexed and confused, and produced no fruit of profitable instruction." He concluded his reflections, which were just, by a handsome eulogy on Melancthon, and exhorted his readers to imitate that great man in moderation, docility, and piety.

The above instance will be considered by the impartial reader, as characteristic of a great and liberal mind. The importance of unity of sentiment with regard to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, can never be too earnestly maintained; but it becomes every man to examine whether, in the distribution of importance to particular truths, his decision be in unison with scripture authority and example: or, in other words, whether he regulate the importance of every article, not by the rank assigned to it in his particular system, but by the relative importance which it occupies in the Holy Scriptures. The truths which, in the New Testament, are represented as important to be believed in order to salvation, are few and obvious, and easily distinguished from what may with propriety be denominated speculative theology. An attention to this simple distinction would prevent numerous mistakes and disputes, the general effect of which is equally injurious and disgusting. Uni-

formity of sentiment on the subordinate points of religion, is plainly impossible, from the state of society; nor will the chimera ever be pursued by any but fanatical bigots, or interested communities. Truth is the friend of Christ, but we should ever remember, that his sheep are also dear to him. If in defending our doctrines, we abandon moderation and Christian charity, we shall convey an impression that they are incompatible with zeal for truth, though it is their union alone which constitutes the true Christian.*

A remarkable and pleasing trait in the character of Calvin must not be omitted. Bucer loudly blamed the vehemence of Calvin; Calvin knew it, and wrote to him expressly to acknowledge his fault. "My struggles are not greater," said he, "against my vices, which are very great and numerous, than against my impatience; and my efforts are not wholly useless. I have not, however, yet been able to conquer that ferocious animal."— "What modesty!" says Vossius.†

* "Men may differ from each other in many religious opinions, and yet all may retain the essentials of *Christianity;* men may sometimes eagerly dispute, and yet not differ much from one another: the rigorous persecutors of error should, therefore, enlighten their zeal with knowledge, and temper their orthodoxy with *charity*, that *charity*, without which orthodoxy is vain; *charity* that *thinketh no evil*, but *hopeth all things*, and *endureth all things*."—*Dr. Samuel Johnson. Life of Sir Thomas Browne*, p. 58.

† Epist. Præstant. Theol. p. 817.

It is important to remark, that the consideration which Calvin enjoyed in Geneva did not place him above the laws. His works were liable to the same censure as those of other writers, and he was frequently compelled to correct them in the manner thought most desirable. Does not this clearly prove that Calvin, instead of directing despotically the opinions of his superiors and his equals, often sacrificed his own to those which were prescribed to him?

M. Gaillard, an historian distinguished for accuracy and eloquence, attributes to Calvin the wars which religion gave rise to in France; but of this he furnishes no proof: on the contrary, it is certain that he sought peace with ardour; that he would have established it universally; that he exhorted all those who attempted to interrupt it; that he wrote in the same strain to all who consulted him; and that he solicited money of the German princes for the persecuted Protestants in France: His correspondence, printed, and in manuscript, leaves no doubt with respect to his pacific intentions.

We have already seen that he was zealous and indefatigable in the pursuit of truth; active and courageous in the propagation of it; pure in his morals, correct in his conduct, and disinterested in all his actions. Superior to trifling considerations of vanity, he despised luxury, honours, and pleasures; his vices arose out of the extremity of his virtues; he instantly became indignant whenever

he saw truth and piety prostrated at the feet of the wicked: an enemy of all dissimulation, he expressed himself with frankness; and as he was naturally violent, his manner was harsh and painful; but he never spared *himself:* he acknowledged his faults; he displayed them unveiled, and frequently treated himself with the same severity which he shewed to others. It is certain that if Calvin did not gain the friendship of all who knew him, he at least commanded their esteem.

In the Ecclesiastical History of M. L'Abbé Berault De Bercastel, it appears that that historian has assembled whatever can be imagined of an atrocious nature, to render the character of a great man odious, whom he did not know; to calumniate those virtues which he could not dispute; and to lower those talents which he was compelled to admit. But it is not difficult to account for the Reformer not being a favourite of the Abbé.

Calvin surpassed all the leaders of his day, by his superior intellect: he was even the reformer of the Romish church, which he induced to suppress many crying abuses, authorized by her silence: he contributed to deliver mankind from the yoke of superstition, and to give them just views of despotism over conscience: by forcing the clergy to study and to reason, he favoured the progress of science and philosophy. But it was in Geneva, especially, that he unfolded the energy of his soul; where he was at once the light of the church, the oracle of the laws, the support of liberty, the re-

storer of morals, the fountain of literature and of the sciences. To him the Genevese are indebted for the virtues which have so long rendered them celebrated, and the sciences which they cultivate with so much success. To the composition of the edicts, civil and political, which have ensured the prosperity of the republic during so many years, he devoted much of his time; so that Montesquieu has remarked with propriety, that "The Genevese ought to bless the moment of the birth of Calvin, and that of his arrival within the walls of Geneva."

Calvin was acquainted with all the great men of his age, who were distinguished either by their rank, or the part which they were then acting in Europe; as is evident from the large collection of his letters in the library of Geneva; from those which are found in the library of the King of France, under the numbers 8585, and 8586, of the Latin manuscripts: as well as from the manuscripts of M. Dupuy, No. 102: there are also a great number in the library of the Duc de Saxe Gotha; they were afterwards collected by Theodore de Beza, who sold them, with his library, to George de Zastrissel. Those which are printed are very generally known, and there are few libraries without some of them.

It has frequently been asked, why Calvin was usually styled Maitre Jehan Calvin?* It has been thought that he took this title as doctor in law; others suppose he was called so, according to the

* Master John Calvin.

Swiss custom, by which the pastors are presented to the people by the title of Master or Doctor; but then all the ministers, who had studied in law, would have adopted the same honour: this usage, however, was not adopted by the colleagues and successors of Calvin.

It is not to be wondered at, that so many good qualities and great virtues excited so many enemies, if we reflect, not only upon sacred, but upon profane history, and consider the adventures of the most famous heroes of Pagan antiquity. Nor will it be thought strange, that so valiant a defender of holy doctrine, a man who had so extreme an horror of vice, and so ardent a love of virtue, should be attacked so vigorously by enemies from without and from within.

In the opinion of a celebrated divine of the present day, Calvin was the "PAUL of the Reformation."—"Had any thing," he remarks, "been wanting in his own writings, in the opinion of his cotemporaries, in his influence with the political and ecclesiastical cabinets of Europe, and in the dread and terror of the Papists, to evince the greatness of this extraordinary man, it would have been supplied by the rancorous malignity which assailed him during his life; and which has been hardly, if at all, abated by his death. His very name seems at this day to blister the tribes of error in all its gradations; and to form a solitary exception to the reverence which the world entertains for departed genius. More than two hundred

and fifty years have elapsed since he went to join the apostle whom he so much resembled, in the kingdom of God; and there is hardly an enemy to the truth, of whatever size, who does not think it incumbent on him to derive importance from 'a gird' at the memory of Calvin."*

Calvin was accused of being a *heretic;* but was not Jesus Christ treated in the same manner by the Jewish priests? He was banished from Geneva, but he was afterwards recalled. And though this had not been the case, did not the Apostles, St. Athanasius and St. Chrysostom, suffer the same treatment? Other attempts were made to blacken his reputation by various calumnies. He has been accused of being ambitious, and of attempting to play the Pope, amongst those of his own persuasion. What! shall he be accused of ambition, who chose for his sphere of action the republic and the church of Geneva, which may justly be called the seat of poverty? Shall it be said that he was avaricious? He, whose effects, after having even sold his library at a high rate, did not produce three hundred crowns?—In order to refute this calumny, "My death," said he, with great justness, "will shew how much they are deceived, who persuade themselves that I am rich."

An instance of *disinterestedness*, which does equal honour to his moral and religious character, and

* A Plea for Catholic Communion in the Church of God.—By J. M. Mason, D. D. 2d edit.

amply refutes the absurd charges of ambition and avarice which have been brought against him, deserves to be generally known. It was related at Geneva, by Deodati, to the first Lord Orrery, who flourished under the reign of Charles I.

"Eckius being sent by the pope, legate into France, upon his return resolved to take Geneva in his way, on purpose to see Calvin; and if occasion were, to attempt reducing him to the Roman church. Therefore, when Eckius was come within a league of Geneva, he left his retinue there, and went, accompanied but with one man, to the city, in the forenoon. Setting up his horses at an inn, he inquired where Calvin lived; whose house being shewn him, he knocked at the door; and Calvin himself came to open it to him. Eckius inquiring for Mr. Calvin, he was told he was the person. Eckius acquainted him that he was a stranger; and having heard much of his fame, was come to wait upon him. Calvin invited him to come in; and he entered the house with him; where, discoursing of many things concerning religion, Eckius perceived Calvin to be an ingenious learned man, and desired to know if he had not a garden to walk in; to which Calvin replying he had, they both went into it; and there Eckius began to inquire of him, why he left the Roman church; and offered him some arguments to persuade him to return; but Calvin could by no means be persuaded to think of it. At last, Eckius told him that he would put his life in his hands; and then said he was Eckius

the pope's legate. At this discovery, Calvin was not a little surprised; and begged his pardon that he had not treated him with the respect which was due to his quality. Eckius returned the compliment; and told him if he would come back to the Roman church, he would certainly procure for him a cardinal's cap. But Calvin was not to be moved by such an offer. Eckius then asked him what revenue he had; he told the cardinal he had that house and garden, and fifty livres per annum, beside an annual present of some wine and corn, on which he lived very contentedly. Eckius told him, that a man of his parts deserved a greater revenue; and then renewed his invitation to come over to the Romish church, promising him a better stipend if he would. But Calvin, giving him thanks, assured him he was well satisfied with his condition. About this time, dinner was ready, when he entertained his guest as well as he could, excused the defects of it, and paid him great respect. Eckius, after dinner, desired to know if he might not be admitted to see the church, which anciently was the cathedral of that city. Calvin very readily answered that he might; accordingly, he sent to the officers to be ready with the keys, and desired some of the syndics to be there present, not acquainting them who the stranger was. As soon, therefore, as it was convenient, they both went towards the church; and as Eckius was coming out of Calvin's house, he drew out a purse, with about one hundred pistoles, and presented it to Calvin;

but Calvin desired to be excused: Eckius told him he gave it to buy books, as well as to express his respect for him. Calvin, with much regret, took the purse: and they proceeded to the church, where the syndics and officers waited upon them, at the sight of whom Eckius thought he had been betrayed, and whispered his thoughts in the ear of Calvin, who assured him of his safety. Thereupon they went into the church; and Eckius having seen all, told Calvin he did not expect to find things in so decent an order, having been told to the contrary. After having taken a full view of every thing, Eckius was returning out of the church; but Calvin stopped him a little, and calling the syndics and officers together, took out the purse of gold which Eckius had given him, telling them that he had received that gold from this worthy stranger, and that now he gave it to the poor; and so put it all into the poor box that was kept there. The syndics thanked the stranger; and Eckius admired the charity and modesty of Calvin. When they were come out of the church, Calvin invited Eckius again to his house; but he replied that he must depart; so, thanking him for all his civilities, offered to take his leave. But Calvin waited upon him to the inn, and walked with him a mile out of the territories of Geneva, where, with great compliments, they took a farewell of each other."*

* See the State Letters and Memoirs of the Right Hon. Roger Boyle, pp. 4, 5.

With regard to *idleness*, of which he has been accused, it is only necessary to glance at his works, to be convinced that no slander was ever more barefaced.

Dr. Hoyle, who wrote under the patronage of Archbishop Usher, mentioning Calvin, says, "What, shall I speak of his indefatigable industry, almost beyond the power of nature; which, paralleled with our loitering, will, I fear, exceed all credit? It may be the truest object of admiration, how one lean, worn, spent, and wearied body could hold out. He read, every week of the year through, three divinity lectures; every other week, over and above, he preached every day: so that (as Erasmus said of Chrysostom) I know not whether more to admire his constancy, or theirs that heard him. Some have reckoned his yearly lectures to be *one hundred and eighty-six*, and his yearly sermons *two hundred and eighty-six*. Every Thursday he sate in the presbytery. Every Friday, when the ministers met to consult upon difficult texts, he made as good as a lecture. Besides all this, there was scarce a day that exercised him not in answering, either by word of mouth or writing, the doubts and questions of different churches and pastors; yea, sometimes more at once; so that he might say with Paul—*the care of all the churches lieth upon me*. Scarcely a year past, wherein, over and above all these former employments, some great volume in folio, or other, came not forth."*

* Biographia Evangelica, vol. II. p. 57.

"Such a preacher he was, that like another Orpheus, he drew *England*, *Spain*, and *Italy* to him, filling *Geneva* with strangers."*

A striking instance of the placability of Calvin is too interesting to be suppressed. His piercing eye had unmasked the hypocrite Troillet; he had also deprived him of the ministerial character to which he aspired. But when the sources of life, exhausted in Troillet, had weakened his hatred, and he perceived death approaching with slow and certain steps, he wished to be reconciled, and sent for Calvin, who ran to him, forgave him, comforted him, and received his last adieu, which was one of gratitude.

The last moments of Calvin were, perhaps, the finest of his life; he bade farewell to the republic like a father who is about to leave a beloved family; to its chiefs, to all its citizens, he gave wise counsels; he anticipated the regrets which his death was about to occasion; and saw the tears which it would cause to flow. His tomb was simple, and without distinction; but he was honoured with the mourning of the country which had adopted him. She owed indeed to him, in part, her liberty and her happiness: his inflexible severity repressed licentiousness, and established virtue, without which the wisest laws speak in vain; he also revived internal union, which enabled them to defend themselves against the common enemy. If

* Marrow of Ecclesiastical History.

the *man* may sometimes blame him, the *citizen* ought ever to bless him.

The just and eloquent character given of the illustrious subject of these Memoirs, by Alexandre Morus, rector of the academy of Geneva, shall close the account.

"As the sun when he arises with a glorious light, extinguishes by his presence all the stars which, during the darkness of the night, held the empire of the heavens in the absence of that great luminary, and scattered, though feebly, the grateful light which they had borrowed from him; thus, when the Sun of Righteousness appears in the beauty of his divine rays, he extinguishes, by his infinite lustre, all those lesser lights of the saints with which the church is adorned on earth. Not that he deprives them of the rank which they hold in the heavens, but they are incapable of appearing in his presence. That divine sun reigns alone in the majesty of day, but the men whom he has sanctified by his grace, fail not to keep their station in the night. And we ought to contemplate them who live in this age of darkness, and to consider them as stars, which shed light to guide our steps into the way which leads to a blessed immortality. Let us, however, be upon our guard, lest we offer an insult to the Sun of Righteousness, by comparing with him those inferior lights which we see darken, disappear, and die away in his presence. Let us ever recollect, that whatever fire or light holy souls possess, is derived from that eternal sun,

and contemplate *God*, rather than man, in those great personages who edify the church. I have thought it necessary, gentlemen, to use this precaution, especially on this day, in which I am about to portray that bright star whose rising has restored to us *light after darkness;* I mean John Calvin, an illustrious personage, if ever there existed one; whose memory deserves to be had in perpetual veneration. I am about to represent to you the great wonders which *God* has accomplished by his ministry. As you have honoured this assembly with your personal attendance, give me also the attention of your mind. I beseech you, inhabitants of Geneva, since your own interests are involved. I intreat you, noble and illustrious strangers, since I am about to address you on the interests of God, and the great things which he hath done to promote his glory.

"I have often considered, that as we cannot, without criminality, make the greatest of men the companions and colleagues of Jesus Christ; so it is necessary, on the other hand, to guard against the opposite extreme, of burying their memory in an eternal oblivion. This would be to despise the rich inheritance of their pains and labours which we enjoy; and to bury their name in silence, without testifying our gratitude by the slightest remembrance. I therefore conjure you, my illustrious hearers, with all the ardour which I possess, and to the full extent which religion will permit, to venerate the name of the great Calvin: let him live

in your remembrance, let him inflame your hearts; let him be revered in the senate; let him be honoured in the church; let your academy and your schools crown him daily with fresh praises and applauses; let your citizens have his triumphs continually in their mouths; let your youth respect him; let his memory, victorious over calumny, be venerated by the whole earth; let him descend from our children to their children's children, to the most remote posterity, that future ages may celebrate with immortal praises the precious recollection of the greatest man whom Providence ever raised up to relieve the church of Geneva.

"Your ancestors, however, have not erected statues to him in your public places, nor built a chapel to his honour, nor raised a monument to his memory. So little consideration did they pay to his remains, that they contented themselves with simply throwing earth upon his body, and with so little distinction from their common practice, that we now seek in vain for the spot where his bones rest; a little moss and turf serving him for a mausoleum. Those wise men judged correctly, that extraordinary virtue (to speak according to the ancients) consecrated itself by its own merit, which renders it sufficiently venerable, without any addition. It despises foreign ornaments, and requires no attire but its own. In a word, the proper recompence which is due to him, is not to engrave his image upon marble or brass, and then to place it upon some superb edifice, as a magnificent the-

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published so great a number of works, so voluminous, and on so great a variety of subjects. But if those persons would consider, not so much the number and size of his works, as the solidity and erudition, the choice and arrangement of subjects, the beauty and purity of language, and other excellent qualities which appear in every line of his works; they would be less surprised that he has written so much, than that he has written so well. Besides which, if those persons would pay attention, not so much to the extraordinary things which he has written, as to those which he has done, they would perceive that his great soul, overwhelmed with a multiplicity of concerns, which followed each other like waves of the sea, knew no other relief from his labours, than a change of occupation.

"Let them farther contemplate the storm of persecutions which assailed him, and those atrocious calumnies which constantly pursued him, and I doubt not that they will rise from simple admiration into wonder. For where is the Argus (if I may be permitted to borrow names from heathen fables) who is alone equal to so great a variety of occupations? Who could alone arrange them with so much wisdom, and execute them with so much success? How many modern Augean stables has he not cleansed? What Centaurs has he not overthrown? How extraordinary then must it appear, that the same person who assisted with so much assiduity at the holy assemblies appointed for the

decision of ecclesiastical affairs, and the examination of the doctrine of the preachers, should be constantly present in the Consistories established for the regulation of morals;—preach daily in the temple;—teach daily in the school;—be consulted at all times on the necessities of the republic;—receive and entertain a crowd of visitors, from whom his house was scarcely ever free;—and be under the necessity of sending every day various despatches to all the countries of Christendom!

"*We* may, indeed, form a better conception of it than others. *We*, who sail in the same vessel; *we*, whose hand is upon the same rudder; *we*, who sustaining, at the most, only a hundredth part of the weight of his labour, seek companions to share it with us; *we*, who notwithstanding this relief, complain continually of the weight of the burden which oppresses *us*. This certainly arises from our not possessing either his shoulders or his strength. Would to God that we might at least imitate his ardour, his application, and his diligence! For what is there so difficult, that a great assiduity will not overcome? What obstacles is it not capable of surmounting? *We* are called studious; but, compared with him, we are idle. I have myself been attached to study through life (if I may be permitted to speak of myself.) I am occupied exclusively with the functions of my charge. I add a good part of the night to the labours of the day; and without wishing for other praises, I dare to pretend to that of *diligence*. Notwithstanding this,

whenever I think of Calvin, I confess that I am ashamed of my idleness, and blush at possessing a mind so ingenious in flattering my negligence. Calvin certainly had not chosen without reason, those expressive words which formed his device—'*Sincerely and Promptly.*' We may, perhaps, have another opportunity to speak of the first. It is sufficient for our present subject to remark now, that he has shewn us the second in its highest perfection, in that wonderful promptitude, and incredible diligence which he discovered in all his actions.

"Considering these things, can it be said that Calvin lived only a short time, when all the time that he lived may, with the strictest propriety, be called life? For neither ambition, avarice, voluptuousness, nor idleness, which rob men of their best days, shared any part of his life. Even sleep interrupted him but little; the other necessities of the body still less. He lived longer than those persons who pass a long succession of years, either in doing nothing, or in acting contrary to their duty. He lived longer than those who, in a soft and shameful idleness, rather squander than use life. These sort of people die long before their last day. He lived a longer life than those who pass their eighty or hundred years in eating, drinking, and sleeping, without study, but not without vice; and who may be said to be dead and buried while they are alive. What advantage, I ask, do they derive from so many years passed in slothfulness and effeminacy? Life is long when

it is husbanded and improved. It must be measured by action, and not by time. It is to be valued by its weight, and not by its duration. For, indeed, a single day of the life of a wise man who fears God, is of more value than the lengthened life of an ignorant and vicious man. Calvin, therefore, lived a long time, though he was taken from the world in the midst of his course, since he never suffered a single hour to escape unemployed; but possessed the address of extending the narrow boundaries which God had allotted him, and of arresting the course of what is, in its own nature, the most rapid of all things.

"We have, therefore, in the person of Calvin, a rich model, not only of a profound and sublime knowledge of divine mysteries, and an inimitable beauty of composition, but also of assiduous labour and prodigious diligence.

"Nor could he behold, without the most lively grief, the vices of his flock, any more than he could permit them in himself. 'If you desire,' said he, 'to have me for your pastor, correct the 'disorders of your lives. If you have with since-'rity recalled me from my exile, banish the crimes 'and debauchery which prevail amongst you. I 'certainly cannot behold, without the most pain-'ful displeasure, within your walls, discipline trod-'den under foot, and crimes committed with impu-'nity. I cannot possibly live in a place so grossly 'immoral. Vicious souls are too filthy to receive 'the purity of the gospel, and the spiritual worship

'which I preach to you. A life stained with sin is 'too contrary to Jesus Christ to be tolerated. I 'consider the principal enemies of the gospel to 'be,—not the Pontiff of Rome, nor heretics, nor 'seducers, nor tyrants,—but such bad Christians; 'because the former exert their rage out of the 'church, while drunkenness, luxury, perjury, blas-'phemy, impurity, adultery, and other abominable 'vices overthrow my doctrine, and expose it de-'fenceless to the rage of our enemies. Rome does 'not constitute the principal object of my fears: 'still less am I apprehensive from the almost infi-'nite multitude of Monks. The gates of Hell, the 'principalities and powers of evil spirits, disturb me 'not at all. I tremble on account of other enemies, 'more dangerous; and I dread abundantly more, 'those carnal covetousnesses, those debaucheries of 'the tavern, of the brothel, and of gaming; those 'infamous remains of ancient superstition, those 'mortal pests, the disgrace of your town, and the 'shame of the reformed name. Of what impor-'tance is it to have driven away the wolves from 'the fold, if the pest ravage the flock? Of what 'use is a dead faith without good works? Of 'what importance even truth itself, where a wicked 'life belies it, and actions make words blush? 'Either command me to abandon a second time 'your town, and let me go and soften the bitterness 'of my afflictions in a new exile, or let the severity 'of the laws reign in the church. Re-establish 'there the pure discipline. Remove from within

'your walls, and from the frontiers of your state, 'the pest of your vices, and condemn them to a 'perpetual banishment.'——In these terms spake Calvin in the council, when he was recalled by the very suffrages which had banished him. A convincing proof of the extreme hatred which he bore to all descriptions of vices.

"Since, therefore, it is evident that Calvin has no equal for depth of doctrine, for eloquence, for erudition, and for diligence; since he was ever ardent in detecting and in censuring every kind of vice, and exemplary in practising all the virtues which he recommended; since he was never known to fail, either in sweetness of manners, or in greatness of courage under trials, or in patience while suffering under injuries; since he was ever admirable for prudence joined with charity, gravity united with affability, severity accompanied with benignity, and modesty, which seemed to dispute the victory with all his other virtues; since, finally, neither imposture, nor envy, nor Antichrist, are able to oppose any thing which does not defeat itself, what remains but that we congratulate our Geneva upon her happiness in having possessed Calvin, recollecting that it is to his cares that she is principally indebted for the truth of her Latin anagram—

"Respublica Genevensis,
Gens sub cœlis verè pia!*

* "The Republic of Geneva,
A people the most pious under heaven."

" and that it is to his labours that she is chiefly indebted for the glory of her *device*, expressed in an emblem in the middle of the name of Jesus the Sun of Righteousness—

" Aprés les ténébres la lumiere.*

" Abridged from another—

" Aprés les ténébres, j'espere la lumiere;†

" which had been used, as if by a prophetic spirit, during the preceding ages."‡

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* " After darkness, light."

† " After darkness, I hope for light."

‡ Panegyrique de Jean Calvin prononcé à Genéve, par M. Alexandre Morus, Recteur de L'Academie.

CHAP. VII.

THE WRITINGS OF CALVIN.

Character of Calvin as an Author and Commentator — Testimonies to his Excellence from Papists and Protestants — Account of his Christian Institutes.

WE have already portrayed the subject of the present Memoirs, in the character of an illustrious Reformer, and shewn the influence of his labours in promoting the revival of pure Christianity. We have seen united in his person, the most entire disinterestedness, the most ardent zeal and active energy co-operating to the diffusion of knowledge, virtue, and happiness: It remains that we now consider him as an author; and it will be abundantly evident, that few persons have better deserved the tributary praises of posterity under this character, than Calvin.

When we consider the extent and variety of his works, the importance of the subjects, and the practical tendency of his writings, we shall be disposed to assign him a very high rank in the class of useful and important authors. Indebted to no temporary or local circumstances for the impression and popularity of his works, their interest, unin-

fluenced by the fluctuation of circumstances and opinions, remains undiminished. What Dr. Johnson says with so much justice of Watts, is equally true of Calvin:—"Few men have left behind such purity of character, or such monuments of laborious piety."*

His character as an author must be ascertained from the multiplicity and variety of his works, rather than from any single performance: it would, indeed, require volumes to review all his works, which were published in Latin, at Geneva, in twelve volumes folio.

But the most important view of the writings of Calvin, and that which is most congenial with the spirit of the present work, is rather an exhibition of his theological sentiments, than a critical review of his compositions; which, were it practicable, would, in all probability, be less interesting, and certainly less profitable.

Under the investigation of Calvin's merits as an author, it would be unpardonable to omit the consideration of his style.

The dignity and majesty of his eloquence were so eminent, that those who had the greatest aversion to his pretended heresy, were constrained to admire in his writings the exact purity of the Latin tongue, and to confess that his latinity was worthy of the Augustan age. Hence, those who are willingly blind, refuse to acknowledge that the

* Johnson's Lives of the Poets. Life of Watts.

mighty energy by which he replaced Geneva under the yoke of Jesus Christ, and recalled multitudes of other people to the practice of a purer and more evangelical worship, was the effect of the finger of God, as undoubtedly it was. They ascribe it, on the contrary, to the soft and persuasive eloquence which he possessed in so eminent a degree. Thus a determined partisan of Popery has not been ashamed to use these words:

"Et toy, Calvin, le fleau du régne a triple etage,
Qui perds le nom Romain par son propre langage."*

Thou, Calvin, the scourge of the triple reign,
Whose Latin pure destroys the Roman name.

In this verse he pretends only to praise the eloquence of Calvin:—eloquence indeed! but an eloquence divine, supported by the grandeur and weight of its subjects, full of nerve and energy; an eloquence, neither gay and comic, like that with which Terrence has enriched his fables; nor stately and brilliant, like that which Virgil has employed to sing the battles and adventures of his heroes; nor delicate and artificial, like that with which Cicero enchained the Romans, fastening them to his lips;—but, an eloquence like that of the apostle of nations. An eloquence by which this new Paul shook the foundations of superb Rome, and reco-

* Barclai.

vered from the tyranny of the Vatican, the empire of Europe. Calvin imitated St. Paul, as St. Paul imitated Jesus Christ. Animated with an apostolic spirit, he despised the flowers and brilliancies of human eloquence, and all the pompous equipage of the rhetoric of the age. His strain, flowing with soft and sober majesty, seemed to be adapted to sacred things alone.

He had already displayed some sparks of this light, when not having yet "chosen the good part," he employed some of his leisure hours in enriching with notes, the books which Seneca has composed on Clemency, and dedicated to the most cruel of emperors. In this essay, he announced what might be expected in future. His Commentaries display a style, free, but exact, agreeable, and majestic; simple and energetic, but pure and polished; modest, but rich; brilliant, but natural; deriving all its beauties from their proper sources. So that Seneca appears risen from the dead.

The vivacity and energy of his genius are conspicuous in his attacks upon the enemies of truth. With what evidence and solidity he establishes his reasonings! How nobly he enriches his subjects, while at the same time there is neither any affectation, nor any smell of the lamp! His stream of mind appears to be perpetual, and pursues its course with equal beauty and fertility. Whoever wishes to be acquainted with the force and beauty of his style, will find an excellent specimen in his answer

to Cardinal Sadolet. The dedication of his Institutes to Francis I. is also universally admired.*

It is no small honour to Calvin, that the circumstance of being born in the later ages of Christianity detracts nothing from his reputation. Should we here be opposed by the names of Austin and of Chrysostom, we may safely reply, that if Calvin had been born in the age of the fathers, he would have been one of the most eminent. Abating that veneration which is excited by antiquity, our author, it is apprehended, will not suffer by a comparison with these illustrious fathers. To say nothing of the errors into which the ancient fathers have fallen, it is sufficiently evident, that with respect to an extended apprehension of the mysteries of Divine truth, Calvin has surpassed them all.

Should this praise be charged with being exaggerated, we refer, for a corroboration of it, to a comparative view of the writings of the respective authors. St. Chrysostom has explained the Psalms.

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* "I have ever thought that the three celebrated Prefaces, that which the President de Thou wrote for his History, that which Casaubon has prefixed to his Polybius, and that which Calvin has addressed to Francis I. king of France, in favour of his Christian Institutes, must be considered as the masterpieces of our age. And in placing that of Calvin in the first rank, it appears to me that not only the sublimity and grandeur of the subject, but also the excellence and beauty, the force and solidity, the purity and elegance of the composition, oblige me to give it this preference."—*Panegyrique de Calvin, par M. Alexandre Morus.*

St. Austin has also written upon them. Calvin, after them, has composed Commentaries upon them. To this comparison we refer the claims of Calvin, persuaded that every candid mind will instantly perceive the superiority of the Reformer; and that the Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms is alone worth their whole works. What father of the church has left behind him so complete an explication of all the books of sacred scripture, with the exception only of the closing Book of the Revelation? "Joseph Scaliger, who scarcely thought any man worth his commending, could not forbear admiring Calvin; and he praised him, among other things, for not commenting on the Revelations; while he owned him far the happiest of all the commentators in apprehending the sense of the prophets."* And Pasquier says, "Calvin was a good writer, both in Latin and French; and our French tongue is highly obliged to him for enriching it with so great a number of fine expressions."†

The great Thuanus, in his admirable History, though a Papist, speaks highly of his eloquence:—"Calvin," says he, "was endued with great acuteness and force of genius, and with a wonderful faculty of eloquence; a very celebrated divine among the Protestants."

"If, in obedience to the impression made by a recent study of the life and writings of Calvin, we

* Bayle. † Biographia Evangelica.

have sketched a too flattering outline of his moral lineaments, the dissatisfied spectator may wander from our exhibition to examine a portrait drawn by a Raphael of the Anglican church in the sixteenth century,—a portrait familiar to all who have walked and studied in the galleries and schools of that church; and, whether faithful or otherwise, deriving every claim to patient and impartial criticism from its having proceeded from the pencil of the great and accredited apologist of our eccleslastical polity."*

"A founder it had," (referring to the Genevese discipline established by Calvin,) "whom, for mine own part, I think incomparably the wisest man that ever the French church did enjoy, since the hour it enjoyed him. His bringing up was in the study of the civil law. Divine knowledge he gathered not by hearing or reading, so much as by teaching others. For though thousands were debtors to him, as touching knowledge in that kind, yet he to none, but only to God, the author of that most blessed fountain, *the Book of Life*, and of the admirable dexterity of wit, together with the helps of other learning which were his guides."—"Two things of principal moment there are which have deservedly procured him honour throughout the world: the one, his exceeding pains in composing the Institutions of the Christian Religion; the

* Christian Observer.—Review of Life and Institutes of Calvin, by Mackenzie and Allen.

other, his no less industrious travels for exposition of Holy Scripture, according to the same institutions. In which two things, whosoever they were that after him bestowed their labour, he gained the advantage of prejudice against them, if they gainsayed; and of glory above them, if they consented. Of what account the master of sentences was in the church of Rome, the same and more amongst the preachers of reformed churches, Calvin had purchased; so that the perfectest divines were judged they who were skilfullest in Calvin's writings; his books being almost the very canon to judge both doctrine and discipline by."*

"Is it true or credible that the man thus characterized by Hooker, at the very time when he was constructing his immortal work *against* the Genevese discipline, is the same individual whom the majority of modern divines would almost excommunicate from the family and fellowship of Jesus Christ? Is this he whom the veriest menials of the Protestant hierarchy, whom our very vergers and apparitors find themselves able to refute with a sneer, while their superiors are stultifying him in the paragraphs of a pamphlet?"†

In Dr. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History the following paragraph and note are added to the original text of Mosheim, by his translator, the highly

* Hooker's Works, vol. I. pp. 129, 138. (Oxford, 1793.)

† Christian Observer.

respectable editor, Dr. Maclaine:—"To escape the impending storm, he retired to Basil, where he published his *Christian Institutions;* and prefixed to them that famous dedication to Francis I. which has attracted universally the admiration of succeeding ages, and which was designed to soften the unrelenting fury of that prince against the Protestants."*

Salmeron has copied, in his commentaries, several passages from Calvin, without citing or changing them. Melancthon calls Calvin *the Theologian.*

He received the praises of all the great men of his age. It is well known that Albert Pighius, who had undertaken the refutation of the Christian Institutes of Calvin, became a Calvinist in one of his principal doctrines.

Papyre Masson, a declared enemy of the Protestants, De Thou, Pasquier, Balzac, Stapleton, and Father Simon, consider Calvin a very learned man, and a great Theologian. Nor was he held in less veneration by the brightest ornaments of the church of England. Witness the exalted testimonies given

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* "This paragraph, relating to Calvin, is added to Dr. Mosheim's text by the translator, who was surprised to find in a History of the Reformation, such late mention made of one of its most distinguished and remarkable instruments; a man whose extensive genius, flowing eloquence, immense learning, extraordinary penetration, indefatigable industry, and fervent piety, placed him at the head of the reformers; all of whom he surpassed at least in learning and parts."

of him by Bishop Andrews, Bishop Bilson, Mr. Hooker, Bishop Morton, Bishop Stillingfleet, and many others, cited by Dr. John Edwards, in his *Veritas Redux*.

There are many among the Roman Catholics, who would do justice to Calvin, if they durst speak their thoughts. Guy Patin has taught us to make this judgment; for he observed, that "Joseph Scaliger said Calvin was the greatest wit the world had seen since the apostles. He acknowledged that no man ever understood ecclesiastical history like Calvin, who, at the age of twenty-two, was the most learned man in Europe."* It appears also, that "Scaliger preferred Calvin's Commentary on Daniel, to all others, and that he used commonly to say, *solus Calvinus in Theologicis*."† Guy Patin tells us, that "John de Monluc, Bishop of Valence, used to say, that Calvin was the greatest divine in Europe."

When we consider that he has written Commentaries on the whole of the Scriptures, the Book of Revelation excepted, we shall easily imagine that they form by far the most considerable part of his works. These Commentaries will ever be held in esteem by impartial readers, for the elegant simplicity, impartial inquiry, and profound piety which characterize them. In a style admirably adapted and expressive, he expands without enfeebling, il-

* Biographia Britannica.

† Histoire Litteraire de Genéve, par Jean Senebier.

lustrates without lowering, and enforces without revolting the sense of the sacred text. Deeply impressed with the dignity and excellency, the divine authority and various uses, of the inspired writings, he investigates their contents with a disciplined understanding, and an obedient heart. His mind revolts not at the mysterious sublimity of a doctrine, when he has evidence that it comes from God. No command appears tyrannical, because he venerates the authority which enjoins it; no precept irksome, because his heart, constrained by the love of Christ, dictates the inquiry, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" Superior to all considerations of a party nature, his expositions are truly liberal, and he is not afraid to meet the *real* sense of a passage. Having in view nothing less than the edification of the Church Universal, his Commentaries breathe a comprehensiveness of design, resembling the liberality of the Sacred Writings themselves. It is not, however, to be denied, that his views on discipline and doctrine were fixed and decided; but it is equally evident that, in comparison with the general interests of genuine Christianity, he allowed himself to feel no concern about the disputed points of religion.

It requires but little penetration to perceive that the great object of Calvin, in all his Commentaries, was the simple illustration of the sacred text. Disavowing all authority but that of the Scriptures, and calling no man Master on earth, his investigations were conducted with that spirit of free inquiry

and independence, which is essential to the character and excellence of the commentator. Forming his system from the Bible, he felt no difficulty with regard to apparently conflicting passages of sacred writ; which he was not at all concerned to reconcile with a previously assumed system.

Though Calvin was extensively known and read as a commentator, the work which did him most honour, and procured him the greatest celebrity, was his "Christian Institutions;" a work written in defence of the Protestants, and intended by its author to be a complete system of theology.

The Inquisitions at Rome, and in Spain, condemned this work: but it met with great acceptation, and has not only appeared in French, but also in High Dutch, Low Dutch, Italian, Spanish, and English. And the following celebrated distich contains the character which it bore among his contemporaries of the reformed religion:

"Præter apostolicas, post Christi tempora chartas,
Huic peperêre libro sæcula nulla parem."*

The sentiments of Calvin being very imperfectly understood, even by Calvinists themselves, it may perhaps answer a useful purpose to lay before the public a view of genuine Calvinism.

This object, it is apprehended, will be best accomplished by laying before the reader some co-

* That is,—"Since the ascension of Christ, no age has produced a book of equal worth, if we omit the writings of the apostles."

pious extracts from the "Christian Institutions," which contain an arranged statement of this Reformer's views on the doctrines and discipline of Christianity. It is a just character of this work, that nothing calculated to recommend a book is wanting to it. The perspicuity so much required of authors, is here as great as it can possibly be. There is nothing to embarrass the reader. Every thing is explained with perfect evidence. Whether it be necessary to establish holy doctrines, or to refute error, Calvin accomplishes it with a depth and solidity, united with a vivacity and address inimitable. The comparisons which he employs are beautiful and majestic, and at the same time so lively and ingenious, that they give a palpable evidence to his explanations and persuasions. The descriptions with which his work abounds, are not less just than magnificent, always adapted to the subjects he is treating, and the situations which they occupy. His transitions are every where easy and natural.*

This incomparable work is divided into four books. The first book, containing eighteen chapters, treats *Of the Knowledge of God the Creator.* The second, *Of the Knowledge of God as he hath declared himself our Redeemer in Jesus Christ*—seventeen chapters. The third, *Of the manner of participating of the Grace of Jesus Christ, of the Fruits which we derive from it, and the Effects which it produces*—twenty-five chapters. The fourth, and

* Epitre Dedicatoire, par Charles Icard.

last, treats *Of the external means or helps which God employs to invite us to Jesus Christ his Son, and to retain us in his Communion*—twenty chapters.

"A leading excellence of Calvin's body of divinity appears to us to be this, that every doctrine is considered as a principle, and not as a mere sentiment; and that every application of such doctrine is not addressed in certain general and indistinct terms to the Christian community at large, but rendered personal and individual. Far from suffering any article of the creed to sleep in the understanding as a quiescent theory, one practical inquiry is found to be perpetually emerging from the deeps of argumentation. The student is constantly excited to inquire, what should be the fruit of all this discussion; the living daily consequence to himself. On this account, there is some difficulty in supposing that the study of the undisputed points of the gospel, in the writings of this divine, can be attractive to any but those who are afraid of giving a cold and unproductive assent to the faith of Jesus Christ; who are afraid of lowering into intellectual speculation, what ought to form the lives, and spiritualize the souls of immortals; and who, instead of consuming their days in efforts to measure what no efforts of theirs *can* measure, are anxious to understand what is intelligible, and what is necessary to their salvation. It should be observed, in common justice to Calvin, that his very highest notions of absolute decrees are, by his own representations,

as entirely practical in their results as any opinion gathered from the Decalogue; that he himself would be the last man to defend the religion of a licentious predestinarian; nay, that he would utterly deny any such character to be possessed of a particle of genuine faith; but, on the contrary, would view him as a practical Atheist, whose speculations about grace were only a species of more elaborate blasphemy."

"Another excellence of the Institutes consists in their author's uniform appeal to the decisions of scripture. "To this infallible guide he resorted; and, if he misunderstood, darkened, or perverted what he found in the Bible, he uniformly says, 'There is my doctrine, and here is its authority;' than which nothing can be a more simple and Christian method of proceeding. It is referring the objector from the deduction to the principle, and inviting him to examine, not only the process of the reasoner's logic, but the truth of the premises with which he sets out, and of the conclusions at which he arrives. How different is this appeal to the common standard of the Christian world, from the *fides carbonaria* of such Papists, or papal Protestants, as grope in voluntary darkness amidst the noon-day blaze of revelation!"

"A Catholic collier was once asked,—'What do you believe?' *What the church believes.*—'And what does the church believe?' *What I believe.*—'And what do you both believe?' *Why we both be-*

lieve the same thing.—Hence the expression, *fides carbonaria*, i. e. the faith of a collier."*

On the Knowledge of a God—This Knowledge greatly corrupted.

On the knowledge of a God, the subject with which this incomparable work commences, we meet with the following judicious remarks:—"By the knowledge of a God, I understand a knowledge which not only enables us to conceive that there is a God, but which also teaches us whatever it is important for us to know, with reference either to our own interest or to his glory. For to speak correctly, we cannot say that God is known where there is neither piety nor religion. I am not here speaking of that peculiar knowledge, by means of which men, lost and condemned in a state of nature, are led to God, as to their Redeemer in Jesus Christ. I speak merely of that primitive and simple knowledge, to which the natural order of the world would lead us, had Adam continued in his integrity. For although in this universal wreck of human nature, no person knows God, either as a Father, or as the author of salvation, or in any sense propitious, or appeased, unless Jesus Christ

* Christian Observer. Review of Life and Institutes of Calvin. By Mackenzie and Allen.

intervene as Mediator to render him favourable to us, and to reconcile us to him; nevertheless, to know God as our Creator, and as that Being who sustains us by his influence, who governs us by his providence, who preserves us by his goodness, and who loads us with his blessings; to know him, I say, thus, is a very different thing from embracing the blessing of reconciliation, as it is offered to us through Jesus Christ in the gospel.

"And as our mind is incapable of rising to the knowledge of a God, without ascribing to him some kind of worship, it is not, however, sufficient to know in general, that it is he alone who deserves to be adored and served, if we are not besides firmly persuaded that he is the source of all good, so as not to seek any thing separately from him. Thus, I think that we ought not only to believe that God, having created the world, sustains it by his power, rules it by his wisdom, preserves it by his goodness, and is especially engaged in governing the human race with equity, in supporting them by his mercy, in taking them under his protection; but we must also be persuaded that there is not a single spark of light, of wisdom, of justice, of power, of rectitude, or of truth to be found any where but in him, or proceeding from him, and of which he is not the cause; which should instruct us to expect them all from him alone, to solicit them all at his hands, and to return him our unfeigned thanks when we have received them. I consider piety as a mingled reverence and love of

God, to which we are led by a knowledge of the favour which we have received from him. If men do not, indeed, feel and acknowledge that they owe every thing to God, that they are tenderly preserved by his paternal care, and that he is the author of all good, so that they need not seek any thing out of him; if they do not make all their felicity to consist in him alone, they will never render him a willing obedience, nor will they ever frankly and heartily submit to render unto him the service which is his due."*

How differently is this interesting subject here treated, from the manner in which philosophers have speculated upon the being and perfections of a God! For this pre-eminence in clearness and interest, our author was certainly indebted to revelation, an authority to which he bowed with the most implicit reverence, and a source of information which has enlightened and enriched the Christian world with knowledge on subjects of the last importance to the present and perpetual interests of mankind.

That the knowledge of a God is naturally imprinted in the mind of man, is maintained by our author, in the following words:—"Lest any should cloak themselves under a vain pretext of ignorance, God hath engraved on the hearts of all men, some knowledge of himself, with which he continually refreshes the memory by new sparks of light, which

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 2.

he causes to shine there from time to time; that all men, without exception, may be condemned by their own testimony, for not having honoured and served him by consecrating their lives in obedience to him. If ignorance of a God were any where to be found, we should naturally expect to meet with it amongst those barbarous nations, entirely removed from honesty, from civilization, and from humanity itself; nor could we produce an example more appropriate or precise. However, as Cicero, that ancient Pagan author, so celebrated for his eloquence, remarks, 'There is no nation so barbarous, nor any people so savage, upon whose minds it is not forcibly impressed, that there is a God.' And those who in every thing else, appear to differ in no respects from beasts, do not, however, fail to retain some seeds of religion. So extensively hath this common and natural prepossession pervaded the minds of all men.

"Thus, since from the beginning of the world there never was any country, town, or family, that could dispense with religion, does it not amount to a tacit confession of the whole human race, that the belief of a Divinity is engraved on the hearts of all reasonable creatures? Idolatry itself, into which men have fallen, is an authentic testimony to this truth. For we know with what reluctance man stoops and humbles himself to place other creatures above himself. Since, then, he rather submits to serve and to adore wood and stone, than to pass for an impious person or an atheist, it follows

evidently, that the impression is lively and strong, that it can never be effaced, and that it would even be easier to extinguish the most natural affections, than the sentiment of piety and of religion."*

While it is true that the excellency of an argument, or the goodness of a cause, ought never to be concluded from the numbers by which they may happen to be supported; it is nevertheless certain, that in some cases, universal consent furnishes the strongest presumptive evidence of the truth and importance of general principles. Thus, the various worship of the heathen nations, uncongenial indeed with the dictates of reason, and incompatible with the more luminous institutions of the gospel, contains an implicit acknowledgment of the responsibility of all intelligent beings, and of the existence and operation of natural conscience, which, in the absence of revelation, is considered by the apostle as the present law, and future rule of judgment of the heathen. It is possible, and indeed to a high degree probable, that the rites and ceremonies of most heathen nations owe their origin to the institutions of the Mosaic dispensation, of which they are only corruptions gradually introduced; but their adoption and continued use, as they include the recognition of a Supreme Being, and a sense of human responsibility, while they illustrate the congeniality of these truths, with the undisguised feelings of the human mind, contain

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 3.

also the authority of a sanction, as well as the evidence of an unsuspicious consent.

But while the existence of this sentiment, being universal, is too obvious to be denied, it is equally evident that it exists under a most degraded form; a truth which our author asserts in the following expressive words:—"As experience shews us on the one hand that there is in the hearts of all men a seed of religion, which the Divinity hath scattered there with his own hand; so it teaches us also on the other hand, that scarcely one person in a hundred encourages this divine seed in his soul, to make it germinate there. For while some are bewildered in the follies of superstition, and others abandon God with a formal design and deliberate malice, from various motives all wander and retire from the true knowledge of him. This is also the reason why we meet with no legitimate or well regulated piety."*

In the sixth chapter our author contends, that in order to arrive at the knowledge of God as a Creator, we must make the Scriptures our guide; in illustration of which, he employs the following reasoning:—"Although that light which is so universally diffused, is more than sufficient to remove every pretext for the ingratitude of men; it is, notwithstanding, necessary, that a more powerful help intervene to lead us suitably even to the Creator. It is not, therefore, in vain, that God, in order to

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 4.

make himself known in a saving manner, hath added to the works of creation the light of his word, and that he hath indulged with this prerogative those whom he determined to treat with more familiarity than others. Having elected the Jews, in order to make of them a peculiar people consecrated to his service, he enclosed them in a fold, lest they should wander after the manner of other nations. Thus, whether God manifested himself to the ancient fathers, by means of oracles, or of heavenly visions, or employed men by whose ministry he suggested what they were to convey by tradition to their posterity, it is absolutely certain that he impressed upon their minds so firm a belief of his doctrine, that they were fully convinced, that what was revealed or preached to them, came from heaven alone. But, that his doctrine might ever continue in the world, and be maintained in its purity in all ages, he appointed that those oracles which he had from the beginning committed to the tradition of men, should be at length reduced to writing, and enclosed in the Scriptures, as in a sacred cabinet, in which the precious deposit might be preserved entire, in the midst of those changes and confusions which are continually taking place throughout the universe. With this view he caused his law to be published amongst the Israelites, to which he afterwards added the writings of the prophets, as so many interpretations of his will.

"If we consider how inconsistent and variable is the mind of man, how easily he falls into forget-

fulness of God, how great is his natural inclination to embrace all sorts of errors, and how strong his passion for new and false religions, it will be evident how necessary it is that God should have public and authentic registers, in which the whole of his salutary doctrine might be contained, lest it should be either buried in forgetfulness, or overturned by error, or corrupted by the audacity of men."*

Of the State in which Man was created.

The state in which man was originally created, is a subject which has given rise to a great variety of speculation and controversy; and it must strike every impartial person, that in the management of this interesting inquiry, barren speculation, and in some instances a tendency to levity, have been too apparent in many writers, who have, notwithstanding, professed to limit their inquiries by ultimate views of scripture authority. The manner in which our author pursues the subject, is in unison with his grand and comprehensive views of scripture truth in general. Those who study theology with a reference to practical improvement, will be gratified with the useful manner in which this great theologian treats so interesting a subject. "We

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 6.

must now speak," says he, "of the creation of man;—First, because man is the most noble and excellent master-piece of the wisdom and goodness of God; and, secondly, because, as we have already said, we can have no true and solid knowledge of the Divinity, if the knowledge of ourselves be not reciprocally connected with it. Now this knowledge of ourselves is twofold, and consists in knowing,—first, the manner in which we were originally formed; and, secondly, into what misery we fell, after the lapse of our first father: for, indeed, we should derive little advantage from our creation, if in that sad and fatal ruin into which we have precipitated ourselves, we were not to perceive the corruption and deformity of our nature. We shall, however, now consider the state of innocence in which we were created.

"Previously, however, to the examination of that miserable condition to which man is subjected by his revolt, it is essential to know what he was when first created. And here it will be proper to use caution, that in representing too minutely the natural evils of man, we do not impute them to the author of his nature. For impiety will endeavour to shelter itself under the pretext, that all evil proceeds in some manner from God. Those persons even, who wish to pass in the world for religious characters, and who speak of the Divinity in more respectful terms, attempt thus to excuse their sins. They allege the corruption of their nature, without considering that they tarnish by this means, though

in an indirect manner, the honour of God, whose glory would be covered with reproach, if in the nature which he gave originally to man there had been any vice or imperfection.

"We must, however, remark, that Adam was formed of the earth, to keep him from indulging pride, and rising above his condition. For since we inhabit houses of clay, and are but dust and ashes, how apparent is the folly of boasting of the excellency of our nature!"*

On the Immortality of the Soul.

On the immortality of the soul,—a doctrine, which, while it confers upon a future state all its interesting attractions, diminishes in proportion the temporary and evanescent gratifications of the present,—our author uses the following just and expressive language:—"That there are in man two different parts, a soul and a body, is evident beyond the smallest doubt. By the word *Soul*, I understand, an immortal, but created essence, the most noble and excellent part of human nature, and which the Scriptures sometimes call *Spirit*. For though these two names when joined together have a different signification, the word *spirit*, when used separately, has the same import as that of soul;

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 15.

as when Solomon, speaking of death, says, 'Then shall the spirit return unto God who gave it.' And Jesus Christ, by commending his spirit to God his Father, (as well as Stephen to Jesus Christ,) intends simply, that when the soul quits the prison of the body, God is its guardian and depositary.

"As to those who imagine that the soul is thus called spirit, because it is simply a breath, or a vigour divinely infused into the body, without having in itself any substance, the truth of the thing itself, and the Scriptures at large, evidently shew how grossly they impose upon themselves. The conscience, by distinguishing between good and evil, corresponding to the judgment of God, furnishes a certain and infallible proof that the spirit is immortal. For how should a simple motion, without essence, penetrate even to the tribunal of God, and alarm us on account of the condemnation which we have merited? Can the body be susceptible of the fear of a spiritual punishment? Who does not perceive that such a sentiment belongs to the soul alone? From whence it follows clearly, that the soul is neither without essence, nor a particular subsistence.

"Secondly, the knowledge which we have of God, testifies that the soul which rises above the world, must be immortal. For, can a feeble inspiration without subsistence, a vigour capable of becoming extinct and of vanishing, be considered as capable of rising to the source of life? Indeed, so many rare and excellent qualities, with which

the human soul is ornamented, and which clearly shew that there are I know not what characters of divinity deeply impressed upon it, are also evident testimonies of its immortality. For the instinct of brutes is limited to their bodies, or extends no farther than the objects which present themselves to their sensuality. But the activity of the human spirit, which traverses heaven and earth,—penetrates into the secrets of nature, and after having embraced all the varieties of the universe in its understanding and memory, disposes each of them in its order, and according to its rank, and ascertains things future from those which are passed,—shews evidently that there is in man a secret and hidden quality distinct and different from his body. By our understanding, we conceive of God, and of angels, who are spiritual and invisible substances, which in no respect applies to the body. We distinguish what is right, just, and honest, from what is not so, which our corporal senses are incapable of; the mind must, therefore, be the seat where this intelligence resides. Even sleep itself, the emblem of death, is an express witness of the immortality of the soul. For it not only suggests thoughts and conceptions of what has never taken place, but affords also presentiments and presages of things yet to come. I briefly touch these subjects, which profane writers have set off with magnificence and exquisite eloquence; but it is sufficient simply to indicate them to Christian readers.

"Besides which, if the soul, separated from the

body, had no subsistence, the Scriptures would not teach us, as they do, that we dwell in houses of clay, and that man at death is unclothed of mortality, and will receive, at the last day, that which is due to the good or bad actions done in the body. Now these passages, and others of the same kind, which are very numerous, not only distinguish the soul from the body, but in attributing to it the name of man in general, they also declare the soul to be the principal part. St. Paul, exhorting the faithful to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and of spirit, refers without hesitation to two subjects, in which the pollutions of sin reside. St. Peter also, calling Jesus Christ the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, would have spoken unadvisedly if there were no souls towards whom he exercised such a function.

"What he says also of the salvation of our souls would be ill founded, as well as what he commands us—'As strangers and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.' The same remark applies to what we read in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that, pastors watch for our souls as they that must give account; which would in no respect be suitable, if souls possessed no existence proper to them.

"This is more fully and more clearly expressed in those words of Jesus Christ, in which he commands us to 'fear him, who, after having killed the body, is able also to cast soul and body into hell.' Add to this, that if souls delivered from the fetters

of the body, had no subsistence after that separation, it is with great impropriety that Jesus Christ represents the soul of Lazarus as enjoying repose and felicity in Abraham's bosom; and on the contrary, that of the rich man as plunged in the torments of hell. But not to insist any longer upon a thing so little doubtful, I shall only add that St. Luke places it among the errors of the Sadduceans, that they believed, that there was *no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit.*"*

The Sentiments of Calvin on the Moral Law.

The sentiments of Calvin, with reference to the law, having in modern times been considerably perverted, it may answer a useful purpose to produce his own words on the subject; which, as they will appear decidedly opposed to the Antinomian heresy, will deprive its abettors of the sanction of his name. On the dignity and use of the law, no writer can have more just sentiments, as will fully appear by extracts from his writings on the subject.

"It will not be difficult," he observes, "to judge, to what end the law ought to be referred, which is that of a perfect righteousness; that man may take the purity and holiness of God for the rule of life. For God has so portrayed his nature in the law,

* Instit. lib. i. cap. 15.

that if any person were to accomplish all that it commands, his life would be an image of the Divinity. On which account, Moses, desirous of impressing the minds of the Israelites with the remembrance of the commandments of God, thus addresses them: 'And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul?' Nor did he fail to repeat the same thing whenever he wished to shew them the tendency of the law. The end, therefore, of the law is to unite man by holiness of life to his Creator; and, as Moses in another place expresses it, to induce him to cleave unto him. The perfection of this holiness consists in two things, which have been already noticed; that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength—and our neighbour as ourselves. The first implies then, that our soul be filled with the love of God; from whence will naturally flow charity towards our neighbour. In this sense I understand the apostle, where he says, that 'the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned;' where we see that a good conscience and faith, that is to say, piety, and the fear of God, is placed in the first rank, from whence springs charity.

"It is, therefore, absurd to imagine that the law teaches only the rudiments of righteousness, and

gives men only the first elements, without directing them to the perfection of good works; since it is not possible to desire a higher perfection than that which is comprehended in this passage of Moses, and that of St. Paul. And indeed, he who is dissatisfied with such teaching, what more excellent or more perfect aim can he have, since the instruction of the law forms man to the fear of God, to the spiritual worship of his majesty, to the observance of his precepts, to the rectitude of his justice, to the holiness of his ways, to purity of conscience, to sincerity of faith, and, indeed, to all the duties of charity.

"And this reason confirms the explanation which we have given, in reducing to the commandments of the law, all the duties which respect piety or charity. So that those who stop at I know not what dry and barren elements, as if the law taught the will of God only by halves, do not thoroughly understand, according to the testimony of the apostle, the end to which it refers."*

"It is easy to perceive what we ought to learn from the law, that God, being our Creator, stands related to us as our Lord and our Father; on which account we ought to render the glory, reverence, love, and fear, due unto him; that we are not at liberty to follow the wanderings of our mind, and the disorderly propensities of our hearts, whereever they would lead us; that we depend so en-

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 8.

tirely upon God, that we ought to devote ourselves exclusively to what is pleasing unto him; that righteousness and integrity are ever acceptable unto him; that, on the contrary, iniquity and injustice are held in abomination by him. So that, if we would not by an impious and profane ingratitude, revolt from our Creator, we must throughout the whole of our days, love righteousness, and apply ourselves to the performance of its duties. Nor can man excuse himself under the pretext of incompetency, and of being a miserable debtor, unable to make any payment. For it is by no means proper to measure the glory of God by the faculties of our nature; since whatever we may be, God is ever like himself, always the friend of righteousness, as he is always the enemy of iniquity. Whatever he requires of us, since he can require nothing unjust, it is evident that we are under a necessity of obeying him by a natural obligation, and that our incapability proceeds from no other cause than our vicious corruption.

"When by means of the teachings of the law, we have arrived at this knowledge, we must then, under the conduct of this legal doctrine, descend into ourselves. From which we shall derive two advantages:—First, by comparing the righteousness of the law with our own lives, we shall perceive that we are infinitely distant from satisfying the will of God; and that we are consequently unworthy of being of the number of his creatures, and especially of deserving to bear the glorious

title of his children. Farther, by considering our powers, we shall be convinced, not only that they are insufficient to fulfil the requirements of the law, but absolutely null and incapable of such an effect. From whence proceeds necessarily a jealousy of ourselves, followed by terrible inquietudes. For conscience is no sooner convinced of sin, than the judgment of God immediately presents itself, and the judgment of God felt, is always accompanied with a frightful horror of death. Besides, the conscience, convinced of its weakness, and of the insufficiency of its forces, naturally falls into despair. From these emotions spring a profound humility and extreme alarm; so that the man, dismayed at the idea of eternal death, which he sees ready to burst upon him, on account of his injustice and his crimes, has recourse to the mercy of God alone, as to the only door of salvation; and, feeling that it is not in his power to pay what he owes to the divine law, cast down and despairing in himself, he lives only to seek elsewhere the help he stands in need of.

"But Jehovah, not satisfied with having shewn the reverence which is due to his justice, in order to inspire our hearts with love towards it, and hatred towards iniquity, has farther added to his commandments, promises and threatenings. For as the eyes of our understanding are so blinded, that the beauty of virtue alone is unable to attract them; this heavenly Father, full of bounty and of clemency, resolves according to his paternal indul-

gence, to lead us to desire and to love him, by the sweetness of the rewards which he proposes to us. He informs us, therefore, that he will recompense virtue; and, that he who will obey his precepts shall not labour in vain. On the contrary, he declares not only that he execrates injustice; but that it cannot escape his vengeance, because he has resolved to punish the contempt shewn to his majesty: And to incite by all possible means, he promises to all those who shall keep his commandments, the blessings of the present life, and the eternal felicity of Paradise. But, on the other hand, he also threatens with temporal calamities, and the punishment of eternal death, those who shall have violated them. For the promise, (referring to the statutes and judgments of the Lord) 'Which if a man do, he shall live in them;' and the threatening also, which answers to it, 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die;' evidently belong to a death, and to future blessedness which will never end; and wherever the good-will, or the anger of the Lord is mentioned, eternal life is included in the first, and eternal perdition under the other.

"In the law we meet with a large enumeration of temporal blessings and curses. In the punishments denounced, the Lord discovers a sovereign purity; since he cannot suffer iniquity without punishing it. In the promises, besides discovering his love for justice, since he does not abandon it without satisfaction, he farther discovers in them a wonderful indulgence and benignity. For being

indebted to his majesty for all that we have, as well as for what we are, does he not with justice demand all that he requires of us, as a debt due to him? Now does the payment of such a debt deserve a reward? God, therefore, abates from his right, when he proposes any recompence for our obedience.

"With respect to the utility which the promises themselves afford us, we have already spoken in part. It will be sufficient to shew at present, that the promises of the law, in a peculiar manner, recommend righteousness to us, in order to shew us with certainty, how agreeable to God is the observance of it; and that punishments, on the other hand, are placed before us in order to induce us to execrate injustice; lest the sinner, plunged in vicious pleasures, become intoxicated with their sweetness, to a forgetfulness that the judgment of the Lawgiver is preparing his eternal perdition."*

Having contrasted the spiritual legislation of Jehovah with that of human governments, and shewn the spirituality and extent of the divine law, as reaching to the thoughts of the heart, and requiring an angelic purity; our author justifies his exposition, by producing the example of Jesus Christ, as a teacher of the same sentiments. "When we say," he observes, "that the sense of the law is such, we are far from introducing an arbitrary interpretation; we only follow Jesus Christ, the faith-

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 8.

ful interpreter. As the Pharisees had imbued the people with the pernicious opinion, that they fulfilled the law, provided they did not violate it by external actions; the Divine Saviour did not fail also to censure so dangerous an error, when he said, that to look with immodesty upon a woman, is to commit adultery; and that those who hate their brethren, are murderers. For he declares those persons liable to the punishment of the judgment, who have only conceived anger in their hearts; those, who by murmuring, testify that they have conceived an offence, punishable by the Council; and those who by imprecations, or by injuries, openly discover their ill will, worthy of the torment of hell fire.

"Those who have not made these observations, have imagined that Jesus Christ, by preaching such a doctrine, is to be considered only as a second Moses, introducing the gospel law to supply the deficiencies of the Mosaic: from whence springs the common maxim respecting the perfection of the evangelical law, that it is in this respect superior to what it was under the Old Testament, which is, on many accounts, a very pernicious error. The refutation of this error is sufficiently easy, because such persons have thought that Jesus Christ made some addition to the law; whereas he merely expounded it; entirely re-established it, and demonstrated its extent by purging it from the falsehoods with which the Scribes and Pharisees had obscured

it, and from the leaven of their traditions, with which they had corrupted it."*

The above quotations from Calvin, on the subject of the moral law, sufficiently evince how remote he was from the Antinomian heresy; and how little they are acquainted with his writings, who charge them with an Antinomian tendency. That many persons, calling themselves Calvinists, have carried his sentiments to an extreme, from which that holy man would have revolted with indignation, is abundantly certain; but, "men of sense will consider that principles are not therefore to be rejected, because they have been abused."† With the exception of Antinomians, all parties are agreed in the belief of the general truth, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" their definitions of holiness are, indeed, various, and many of them defective; but they all include a recognition of the Scripture declaration of the relative importance of holiness. The Antinomian alone furnishes an instance of contradiction to the whole spirit of Christianity. Religion, considered with reference to heaven, stands only in the relation of a mean to an end. The Scriptures afford us very little positive information with respect to heaven itself; but the general inference deducible from their description is, obviously, that whether it be a state or a

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 8.

† Bishop Hurd's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies.

place, its element is purity. It is, therefore, the great object of Christianity to form its happy subjects "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Light is the known emblem of purity, and as such is applied to the Divine Being, of whom we read,—"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." But if we were to judge of the future heaven of Antinomians by their sentiments and conduct, we should scarcely expect to find them associated with "the spirits of just men made perfect." Under the influence of genuine Christianity, the mind not only respects the authority of its precepts, but acquires a supreme attachment to them.—"O how I love thy law," is the undisguised expression of the heart; nor would the real Christian, if it were possible, wish to be dispensed from the authority of the moral law, as a rule of life. Knowing that it requires an obedience, which it is his privilege to yield, while he admires its sublime morality, he respects its solemn requisitions. The error of those, who, because the law is a ministry of death in its operation on the guilty, contend that it is no longer a rule of life to believers under the gospel dispensation, is treated by our author with suitable severity. "Some ignorant persons," says he, "hardily reject Moses in general and without exception, and wish to dispense with the two tables of the law, because they imagine it is by no means suitable for Christians to attach themselves to a doctrine which contains a ministry of death. Moses has fully declared, that although the law can

only engender death in the sinner, it is nevertheless highly advantageous to the faithful; for, being at the point of death, he uttered that solemn protestation to the people:—'Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify unto you this day; which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law, for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.'

"If no one can deny that there is in the law a perfect model of righteousness, we must of necessity conclude one of two things; either that we ought to have no rule for the regulation of our lives, or, that we must abide by this; since there cannot be many models of righteousness, but one, alone, perpetual and immutable. What David, therefore, says of the righteous man, that, 'in the law doth he meditate day and night,' is not to be understood of any particular age, but to be extended to the end of time. Nor are we to be surprised that it requires of us a holiness more perfect than we can arrive at, while we are imprisoned in these bodies. For when we are under grace, it no longer executes towards us the office of a rigid exactor, whom we cannot satisfy, without paying all his demands; but, by exhorting us to perfection, to which it calls us, it performs the part of a faithful guide, who shews us the end at which we must aim with all our powers during the whole of our lives; and to which it is no less useful for us to aspire, than it is agreeable to our duty to perform. It will be sufficient if in this contention we persevere, since the whole of

life is a race, at the end of which the Judge will graciously reward us, notwithstanding our imperfections.

"The law, therefore, being an exhortation to believers, not by binding their consciences by the fear of its curse, but by awakening and by soliciting them; by censuring their vices, and their defects; many persons, desirous on that account of representing our deliverance from its curse, maintain, that the law is abrogated as it respects believers. (I am now speaking of the moral law.) 'It is not,' say they, 'that it ought not ever to command them what is right and just; but it is no longer what it was before to them; that is to say, it no longer confounds and dismays their consciences by the terrors of its condemnation. The apostle Paul, indeed, teaches with sufficient clearness in his Epistles, such an abrogation of the law. Jesus Christ also taught the same truth, as appears from his declaration that he came not to destroy the law; which he would not have made, if he had not been accused of wishing to abolish it, and if this opinion had not been common and familiar amongst the Jews. Nor would they have had that idea, had it not been founded upon some pretext: so that it is to be supposed, that the opinion which they had formed of Jesus Christ, proceeded from a false interpretation of his doctrine, as it is, indeed, the custom of most men to mutilate the truth, in order to give currency to their errors.

"That we may not fall into the like mistake, it

will be necessary to distinguish carefully, between what is abrogated of the law, and what still remains in force. When the Lord Jesus says,—'Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled,'—he clearly shews by such language, that the obedience and reverence due to the law are not in the least diminished by his coming; and that for the best of reasons, since he came to enforce its rights by removing its transgressions. The doctrine of the law, therefore, remains unaltered by the gospel of Jesus Christ, which in no respect prevents its disposing us to good works of every kind, by teaching, reproving, and correcting us."*

Various are the reasons which might be assigned for the perpetuity of the law as a rule of life to believers; but it is hoped that the just and conclusive reasonings above quoted, will be of sufficient weight to convince the impartial reader of the folly and wickedness of those, who, under a pretext of honouring the character and work of Jesus Christ, pour the most daring contempt upon the legislation of Jehovah. But, if the sentiment opposed be dishonourable to the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is big also with the most mischievous effects to society. It is possible that men may be better than the prin-

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 7.

ciples which they profess; but the instances are so few, and the tendency of Antinomian sentiments, in particular, is so uniform, that we are justified in denouncing the character as hateful to God, and dangerous in the highest degree to society; but let such persons learn what that meaneth, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid!"

The moral law, being founded on the nature of the Deity, can never admit of repeal. The same reasons which rendered it necessary at its promulgation, continuing in unabated force, preclude the very possibility of its being abolished; for, either some change must take place in the Deity himself, which it is absurd to suppose, or the relation of the creature to the great First Cause must be destroyed, which is impossible; or, the infinite reasons upon which the Divine government is founded, must remain in full force. It is, therefore, obvious that the authority which has enacted the moral law can alone repeal it; but, as the grounds of that law must be resolved into the original claims of the Divine Being upon his creatures, which are in their very nature immutable; it is evident that the authority of God can never be found in opposition to those claims; and, that it is in vain therefore to look for a repeal which would compromise the Divine character. If, however, the repeal had been either practicable or expedient, it would doubtless have been made by the great Legislator of the Christian economy, who expressly informs us, that

he came *not to destroy the law, but to establish it.* Since, therefore, an unrepealed law continues by its original authority in full force, and no repeal of the moral law can be shewn to have taken place, the Christian economy leaves the subject untouched; and he who presumes upon a wilful violation of that law, incurs the aggravated guilt of sinning against the more luminous exposition of that authority contained in the very dispensation which he makes the pretext of his emancipation.

A glance at some of the effects which would unavoidably result from the repeal of the moral law, will be sufficient to convince all who are not under the delirium of Antinomianism, that a more dangerous delusion has never been propagated by him who was "a liar from the beginning."

It is generally allowed, that the restraints of human laws are not to be put in comparison with those of Divine legislation; and the history of fanaticism abundantly proves how feeble are the barriers of human institutions, when an apprehended emancipation, by Divine authority, takes possession of the mind. The national and individual crimes of the Papists, as well as the enormities of the fanatics of Munster, too well demonstrate the truth of the remark. In proportion, therefore, to the importance of the well-being of society, it is desirable that the impiety and anti-social tendency of Antinomianism be denounced and counteracted, since it is in its very principle, a violation of all law, human and divine. When, therefore, society shall be

brought to believe, that God has no rights, and our neighbour no claims; that the one may be insulted with impunity, and the other injured without remorse; the term of human life will be too short to calculate the evils to which it will be incident.

On the Doctrine of Election.

In the train of sin, and amongst the chief of our woes, experience requires us to include *ignorance;* and there is, indeed, scarcely any crime which does not stand in some connexion more or less remote with it. If this ignorance were merely natural, it would be some extenuation; but it is, on the contrary, evident, that it is wilful and perverse. "Light is come into the world, but men choose darkness rather than light." It is to this fact that infidelity must be referred, since the evidence, external and internal, in favour of the Christian revelation, is so complete, that it requires abundantly more credulity to remain an infidel, than is imputed to those who embrace Christianity. The inspiration and authority of the Scriptures being once admitted, the mind becomes disposed to exercise an implicit faith with regard to the detail of its contents, and, instead of trying Scripture truths at the bar of reason, submits the understanding to the authority of faith. The prevailing inquiry will of course be, what doctrines are revealed, and with

what view; nor will it revolt such an inquirer that the reasons of the doctrine are less distinctly revealed than the doctrine itself. Before a disciplined understanding, and an obedient heart, theological difficulties vanish and subside. The rejection of a doctrine, on the ground of not being able to comprehend it, is a modest way of putting ignorance in the chair, and constituting it the judge of truth. When we consider how many things in the natural world baffle the most acute investigation, shall we be surprised, if, in Christianity, a world of miracles, the same character of ignorance accompany us there? The opposition made to particular doctrines, while it develops the depravity of human nature, illustrates the truths opposed. Those sentiments which pay the least deference to human nature, and require the most implicit acquiescence, contain internal evidence of their authority. No doctrine, perhaps, has been opposed with more violence and virulence, than the doctrine of election; though the thing itself is only an illustration of that sovereignty, which, when it is displayed in the course of providence, commands a general acquiescence. It is not difficult, however, to account for the unpopularity of this doctrine, which so entirely excludes human merit; a circumstance alone sufficient to excite the inveterate opposition of the ignorant, but arrogant Pharisee. The application of rules of human conduct to the Divine Being, has proved a fruitful source of misconceptions, with regard to the plans and operations of Jehovah; the

presiding character of whose dispensations is, *sovereignty.* When it is recollected that human nature is universally depraved, and, "that in a way of justice none of us should see salvation," the Divine choice of some, to what is undeserved by all, will excite the less surprise, especially in those persons who are the most deeply sensible of their own unworthiness of so distinguishing an act of royal favour. It is, indeed, true, that this doctrine has been abused to the most licentious purposes; but it is allowed, even by Dr. Priestley, (whom no one will suspect of partiality to it,) that, "the doctrine of a general and most particular providence, which is so leading a feature in every scheme of predestination, brings God so much into every thing, that an habitual and animated devotion is the result."*

The doctrine of election being the distinguishing peculiarity of Calvinism, the reader will, no doubt, be pleased to see it stated and defended in the words of the great Reformer.—"The covenant of grace," he observes, "not being equally preached to all the world, nor received by all in the same manner where it is preached, affords a display of the mysterious conduct of God in this diversity, since it cannot be doubted but that it subserves his good pleasure. As it is evident that this takes place by the Divine will, that salvation is offered to some, and that others are excluded from it, so it gives

* Doctrine of Necessity, p. 162.

rise to the most interesting questions, which can only be resolved by instructing the faithful in what they ought to believe concerning election and Divine predestination; a subject which to many persons appears involved, and of difficult comprehension, because they can see no reason why God, out of the common mass of mankind, should select some to predestinate them to salvation, and others to predestinate them to death. It will, however, appear in the sequel, by testimonies from the Scriptures, that they embarrass themselves for want of good sense and discernment. Besides which, we shall discover in that obscurity which alarms them, how far this doctrine is not only useful, but also pleasant and delightful, on account of the excellent fruits which we derive from it. Never shall we be persuaded in a proper manner, that our salvation arises out of the gratuitous mercy of God, if we possess not at the same time the knowledge of his eternal election. For by not adopting indifferently the whole world to the hope of salvation; but by giving to some, what he refuses to others, he, by this comparison of his grace, renders it more estimable and more illustrious."*

"I acknowledge that the profane and impious have, in this doctrine, found subject matter for criticism and raillery; but if we fear their audacity, we must be silent on the principal articles of our faith, since there is scarcely any one which they

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 21.

have not polluted with their blasphemies. A rebellious and obstinate spirit will discover no less insolence, upon hearing that in the one essence of God there are three persons, than that God, when he created man, foresaw what would happen to him. Nor will such a person fail to laugh and jeer, when told that the world has been created little more than five thousand years. Perhaps he will inquire why the power of God lay so long dormant and inactive? Nor can any thing, indeed, be offered, without being exposed to such profane raillery.

"The sentiment which some believers entertain, that this dispute is dangerous, because it is contrary to exhortations,—is calculated to shake our faith, and troubles and subdues the mind,—is a vain and frivolous allegation. St. Austin confesses that it was on these grounds he was reproved for preaching too freely the doctrine of predestination, which he also abundantly refutes, as indeed he might easily do. As there are opposed to the doctrine which we shall establish, various absurdities, it will be proper to solve them in their respective order. I desire only in general, to have this article granted to me; that as we ought not to endeavour to discover what God has resolved to conceal from us, so neither ought we to neglect what he has fully revealed to us; lest he should on the one hand tax us with too great curiosity, or on the other accuse us of ingratitude.

"I suppose there is no person of any piety, who will absolutely deny that predestination, by which

God hath chosen some men to the hope of salvation, and has adjudged others to eternal damnation. But many persons involve this doctrine in difficulties, and especially those who pretend to found it upon the Divine prescience. Both of these things we establish, that God foresees all, and that he disposes of all; but we maintain that it confounds every thing to subject the predestination of God to his prescience. When we attribute a foreknowledge to God, we mean that all things have ever been and remain eternally before his eyes. So that with respect to his knowledge, nothing is future nor passed; all things are present to him, and so present, that he does not only imagine them by representing to himself their ideas, like those things which present themselves to us through the medium of the imagination, when our souls retain them in our memory; but he beholds and contemplates them as though they were really before his eyes. This prescience extends through the circuit of the world, and over all creatures. We call predestination the eternal decree of God, by which he hath resolved in his counsel what he would do with every man in particular.

"God hath not only given testimony to the doctrine of individual predestination, but hath also afforded us a pattern of it in the race of Abraham: for he hath therein clearly shewn, that it belongs to him to ordain the destiny of every people, according to his own good pleasure. 'When the Most High,' says Moses, 'divided to the nations their

inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel: for the Lord's portion is his people: Jacob the lot of his inheritance.'* He elsewhere speaks more expressly, saying, 'The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the fewest of all people); but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand.' The same assertion is often repeated. 'Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also with all that therein is; only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.'

"He also shews them elsewhere, that the love of God is the cause of the protection with which they were favoured. This the faithful unanimously confess. 'He hath chosen us for his inheritance, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved.' For to that gratuitous love they attributed all the excellency with which God hath crowned them, because they are well assured, not only that they have not acquired by any merit the advantages which they possess, but that the holy patriarch Jacob himself did not possess sufficient virtue to derive, either to

* Deut. xxxii. 8, 9.

himself or to his successors, so high a prerogative. The prophets also mention their election, in order to reproach them, and to cover them with confusion, for having so basely fallen by their ingratitude.

"But what reply will they make, who pretend to limit election to the dignity of men, or to the merit of their works? They see that one nation alone is preferred to all the rest of the world; they hear from the mouth of God himself, that he was not induced by any consideration to be more inclined towards a despicable, and afterwards a miserable and a rebellious people, than towards others. Will they plead against God, that he intended to propose to us such an example of his mercy? But their murmurings and their contradictions will not hinder the execution of his work. By throwing their blasphemies, like so many stones against heaven, they will never wound his justice; they will only return upon their own heads. The Israelites, you perceive, are led to this principle of gratuitous election in their thanksgivings to God: 'It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.' The negative employed is by no means superfluous; it is added that we may exclude ourselves; that we may not only learn that God is the author of all the blessings which render us acceptable, but that he was self-induced in the communication of them, since he could find nothing in us worthy of such liberality.

"To this doctrine the song of the whole church is responsive: 'O God, our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them. It is to be remembered, that the land of Canaan is to be considered as a visible symbol of the secret election of God, by which they were adopted. The words of the prophet David contain the same idea:—'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.' Samuel animates the righteous of his day, by the same consideration to entertain a good hope; 'for the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great name's sake; because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people.'"*

From the above considerations, it must appear to every impartial and reflecting mind, that, in the dispensations of Providence from the earliest ages, a perpetual illustration of the divine sovereignty hath been furnished, calculated to illustrate the character of Jehovah, as an independent being, deriving all his motives from himself. That the greatest and the best of beings should also be an absolute Sovereign, is a proposition so obvious, that it were trifling to attempt the illustration of it.

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 21.

The sovereignty of God admitted, (and it is presumed few persons, if any, calling themselves Christians, will dispute it), furnishes a reply to all objections against the doctrine of election, as inconsistent with the character of Jehovah; election being only an act of that sovereignty so admitted. But, if such an act of sovereignty be in itself just, it is also divinely attested. The election of the Jewish nation to be a distinct people from the rest of the world, and to exclusive privileges, may be considered as a specimen of the style and manner of the great Supreme, whose majesty places him above all inquiry and censure, though his goodness condescends to reveal a part of his ways; but *how little of him is known!*

Those who bound their inquiries by the decisions of Scripture, will attend with candour and impartiality to testimonies in favour of this doctrine deduced from thence.

The cause of election, as stated in the Scriptures, appears to be the uninfluenced good pleasure of God, irrespectively of all qualities and circumstances in the subjects of that choice. That works, either past or future, are of no consideration on this subject, our author proves with sufficient evidence, by observing, that "Wherever the good pleasure of God reigns, works, of whatever kind, can be of no consideration. It is true, that in this passage the apostle does not pursue the antithesis, which must, however, be understood, as he himself, elsewhere explains it. 'He hath saved us,' says

he, 'and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' And I have also shewn, that the words already handled, 'That we might be holy and without blame,' ought to remove all scruples from our mind. For if we say that he hath elected us because he foresaw that we should be holy, we shall reverse the apostle's order. We may, therefore, reason thus, with entire confidence: Since God hath elected us in order that we might be holy, it was not, therefore, because he foresaw that we should be so. For these two things are opposed to each other; that the faithful derive their holiness from election, and that, nevertheless, it was in the view of that holiness that they were elected. The subterfuge to which they always have recourse, ought here to be disregarded; that although God does not bestow the favour of election to preceding merits, he confers it, nevertheless, on account of future merits. For when the apostle says that the faithful were elected that they might be holy, he thereby signifies that all the holiness which they may possess, derives its origin from election. And how can it ever be made to agree, that those things which take their rise from election, and which election itself produces, should influence God to the act, and be the cause of it?

"The apostle confirms what he had said more strongly yet, when he adds, that God hath elected us according to his good pleasure, which he had

purposed in himself. For that is equivalent to saying that he considered nothing out of himself, to which he had any regard in forming this resolution. He, therefore, adds, that the source of our election ought to be referred to this end, that we might be to the praise of the grace of God. Nor does the grace of God merit to be celebrated in our election, unless that election be gratuitous. This it cannot by any means be considered, if God is influenced in the choice of his people, by the consideration of their works respectively. Thus, what Jesus Christ said to his disciples, is equally true as applied to the faithful in general: 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.' By which expression, he not only excluded all previous merits, but farther signified that they possessed nothing in themselves on account of which they deserved to be elected, unless he had anticipated them by his mercy. In which sense we must understand the expression of Paul, 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?' where he endeavours to shew that the goodness of God anticipates men in such a sense, that it finds nothing in them, either past or future, calculated to attract his good-will.

"Let us, however, attend to what the Supreme Master and Teacher himself pronounces on this subject. Perceiving in his hearers so great a hardness of heart, that his preaching appeared to be almost useless to them, to prevent the abuse which the weak might make of it, he exclaims, 'All that

the Father giveth me shall come to me; and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.' Let it be well remarked, that when we are placed under the protection of our Lord Jesus Christ, it proceeds from the gift of the Father, as its principle and source. Some persons may contend, perhaps, that God acknowledges, in the number of his people, those only who voluntarily give themselves to him by faith. But Jesus Christ insists simply upon this point, that although the whole world should be shaken by the numerous revolts which take place, that the counsel of God remains still firmer than the heavens, that election shall never fail. We see in the gospel that the elect belonged to their heavenly Father before he gave them to his only Son. If it be asked, whether they naturally belonged to him, it is replied, that he constitutes those his who were far from him, by attaching them to himself. The words of Jesus Christ are too clear to be obscured by any gloss whatever: 'No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.' Our divine Saviour having said that the disciples who had been given to him were the possession of his Father, adds towards the close, 'I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.' From whence, therefore, does it proceed, that the world in general does not belong to its Creator, if it is not be-

cause grace delivers from the curse and wrath of God, a few persons who otherwise would have perished, and leaves the world in that perdition to which it was destined?

"Farther, though Jesus Christ places himself, as it were, between his Father and his people, he nevertheless attributes to himself the right which he possesses, in common with the Father, to choose whom he pleases: 'I speak not of you all,' says he, 'I know whom I have chosen.' Should it be asked, from whence he chose them? he elsewhere informs us that it was *out of the world*, which he excludes from his prayers, when he recommends his disciples to his Father. It deserves, however, to be well observed, that when he says he knows them whom he hath elected, he designates a certain number of mankind, not distinguishing them from the rest for the virtues or qualities which they possess, but on account of their being separated by the heavenly decree. From whence it follows, that those who belong to the election of which Jesus Christ is the author, are not superior to others in themselves. Where he elsewhere places Judas amongst the elect, though he was indeed a devil, it refers merely to his office. The apostleship was indeed a mirror of the favour of God, as St. Paul frequently acknowledges respecting himself; it did not, however, include the hope of eternal salvation. Judas, therefore, by exercising his ministry with perfidy, was indeed worse than a devil; but those whom Jesus Christ hath united to his own body,

he will never suffer to perish, because he will ever execute what he hath promised to maintain—their salvation; that is to say, he will display a divine power, greater than any in the world."*

Having thus irrefragably established the authority of the doctrine upon Scripture evidence, our author proceeds to adduce the testimonies of Bernard and Austin, and replies with great solidity of argument to the various calumnies usually directed against it. But it would comport neither with the design of the present work, nor probably with the reader's inclination, to follow the arguments, however judicious, by which he repels the objections alleged against the tendency of the doctrine. It is evident that the doctrine itself stands closely connected in the Scriptures with personal holiness; which is there enjoined upon the ground of the distinguishing love of God through Jesus Christ; and though good works have no influence on the decree of election, they are considered as the *objects* of predestination, as the individual is the *subject* of election. An habitual exemplification of the Christian character in all its parts, being the only genuine evidence of election, no man is entitled, on the ground of self-complacency, to write his own name in the Lamb's book of life.

It is worthy of remark, that, notwithstanding the verbal difference between Calvinists and Arminians, upon the question, "Are there few that shall be

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 22.

saved?" there is in point of fact, an identity of result upon each statement; since both parties consider *conversion as essential to salvation*, and unite in ascribing regeneration to a divine and sovereign influence, asserted in the passage, "the wind bloweth where it listeth." There is, therefore, a manifest fallacy in the argument that more persons will be finally saved upon the Arminian than upon the Calvinistic hypothesis; since the numerical amount is *precisely the same* upon either supposition, conversion being indispensable to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven.*

On the Doctrine of Reprobation.

When it is considered what odium has been attached to the Calvinistic system, on the ground of its including the doctrine of reprobation, it cannot, surely, be thought irrelevant to the object of the present undertaking, to insert the statement of Calvin, with reference to that subject.

"Let us now speak," says he, "of the reprobate, referred to by St. Paul.† For as Jacob was received into favour without having merited any thing by his good works; so Esau was rejected of God, before he was stained with a single crime. If we look towards works, we offer an insult to the

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* John iii. 5. † Rom. ix. 13.

apostle, as if he had not seen what is so evident to us. And that he did not include them is apparent, since he principally urges this article, that, though they had done neither good nor evil, the one was chosen while the other was rejected. From whence he infers, that the foundation of divine predestination is not to be found in works. Besides, in reply to the question, whether God be unjust in acting thus? he does not intimate that God treated Esau according to his deserts. This, however, is precisely what he ought to have said, as it would have been the most clear and natural defence of the equity of God. But he gives an entirely different solution, asserting that God creates the reprobate, in order to shew forth in them the glory of his justice. By adding, indeed, that he shews mercy to whom he pleases, and hardens whom he will, we see how he imputes both these actions to the good pleasure of God. If, therefore, we can allege no other reason wherefore God condescends to honour his people with his mercy, than because it pleases him; neither can we assign any other, wherefore he rejects others, than his own will. For when it is said, that God hardens, or that he shews mercy according to his good pleasure, it is intended to teach us to seek no other cause than his will alone.*

"But when men hear these things asserted, they are incapable of restraining their intemperance and

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 22.

audacity, but break out into tumults, as though a trumpet were sounded for the assault. Many persons, under the pretext of supporting the interests of the glory of God, and of preventing any unjust blame from being thrown upon him, consent to the doctrine of election, but deny that he reprobates any. But this subterfuge is puerile and absurd, since election cannot subsist unless it be opposed to reprobation. It is admitted that God separates those whom he adopts to salvation; it is, therefore, grossly impertinent to say, that those who are not elected obtain by chance, or by their own industry, what is bestowed from above on very few persons. God, then, reprobates those whom he leaves, and for no other reason, than because he chooses to exclude them from the inheritance which he has destined for his children. Nor is the audacity of men to be endured, which is not to be repressed by the authority of the word of God, when it relates to the incomprehensible counsel of God, which even angels adore. We have also just heard, that this hardening is as much in the hand of God, as his mercy. We have seen, indeed, that St. Paul does not give himself the trouble, like some great doctors, to exonerate God by lying for him; he merely shews that a vessel of clay is not permitted to dispute with Him that made it. Farther, those who cannot endure the thought that God should reprobate any, how will they extricate themselves from that sentence of Jesus Christ?—'Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall

be rooted up.' They admit that all those whom the Father has not condescended to plant in his field as sacred trees, are manifestly destined to perdition. If they deny this to be a mark of reprobation, there is nothing so clear that they will not obscure. Though they cease not to murmur, let our faith be constrained within the boundaries of sobriety, and listen to the caution of St. Paul: not to complain of God, if, 'willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, he endure with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.' Let readers attentively observe this circumstance, that St. Paul, in order to cut off all murmurs and calumnies, attributes a sovereign empire to the wrath and power of God, since it is equally unjust and unreasonable to profess to investigate the secret judgments of God, which swallow up all our powers by their unfathomable depth.

"The conduct of God in inflicting upon the reprobate the punishment due to them, and in bestowing upon his elect the grace which they did not deserve, may be easily defended against all accusation, by the similitude of a creditor, who has an unlimited right over his debt, to remit it to the one, and to enforce the payment from the other, according to his own pleasure. The Lord may, therefore, shew favour to whom he will, because he is merciful; and not to all, because he is just:

in bestowing upon some what they do not deserve, he shews that his favour is gratuitous; in not bestowing it upon all, he shews what all deserve."*

An opinion equally singular and erroneous having been adopted and acted upon by several ministers of reputedly Calvinistic sentiments; that, because salvation is restricted to the elect, the preaching of the gospel ought also to be exclusively addressed to them; a brief refutation of so absurd an hypothesis can require no apology.

How this sentiment can be reconciled with the commission given by the risen Redeemer to his disciples, to preach "repentance and remission of sins in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem,"† those who maintain it, have yet to shew. That the disciples, if they understood the doctrine of election, could have any grounds for supposing Jerusalem sinners to be objects of that decree, is a supposition too glaringly absurd to be countenanced by any reflecting mind. So entirely hopeless a task as that of preaching to persons, some of whose hands were yet reeking with the blood of their Master, would have required nothing less than that divine commission which they received, to inspire them with courage and success. But, upon the principle of these spurious Calvinists, they acted completely out of character, in calling those sinners to repentance, and the remission of their sins; and ought even to have dis-

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 23. † Luke xxiv. 47.

obeyed the divine and benevolent command. The Saviour's command to the eleven, to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," must be equally unintelligible upon so singular a principle; unless we are to understand "every creature" to be a term descriptive of the elect, in which case the whole world must have been in an elect state—which is absurd.

If it be urged, that, being "dead in trespasses and sins," sinners are naturally incapable of believing and obeying the gospel call; so were the inhabitants of Jerusalem, where the first Christian church was planted. The rule of conduct for rational agents being the revealed will of God, and not his decrees; wherever a Divine appointment is interposed, implicit acquiescence and prompt obedience become the duties of all professing Christians. As well might Ezekiel have refused to prophesy to the dry bones, on the ground of the extreme improbability of any effect resulting from his obedience; but complying with the Divine appointment, a stirring amongst the dry bones, which became at length animated into a great army, illustrated the divine power, while it explained the positive command.

But the spirit of the objection is not only at variance with evangelical sentiment, but offends equally against the authority under which it takes shelter. How little claim persons who advocate this sentiment really possess to be considered Calvinists, will appear from the following quotation from the

leader under whom they choose to arrange themselves:—"But to what end (some will reply) do exhortations tend? I answer, if men obstinately despise them, they will be witnesses to convict them when they appear before the tribunal of God. They even now strike the evil conscience: for though they affect to despise, they are unable to disprove them. But what shall the poor sinner do, it will be replied, since the melting of heart necessary to obey, is not afforded to him? To which I reply, how vain is it for him to seek such excuses, since he cannot impute the hardness of his heart to any one besides himself.

"Should any one ask, why they are warned of their duty? Why are they not rather left to the conduct of the Holy Spirit? Why are they solicited by exhortations, since they can only comply with them, so far as the Spirit enables them? Why are they corrected when they have departed from the right way, since they err and fall by a necessary and inevitable infirmity of their nature?—This is briefly our answer:—O man, who art thou that wouldst impose laws upon God? If he choose to prepare us by means of exhortations to receive that very grace, to obey those exhortations which are addressed to us, what hast thou to object to this conduct of the Lord, and what is there in it which thou canst justly contemn?"*

The importance of pointed addresses to the con-

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 5.

sciences of sinners, may be ascertained from the great utility of such works as Baxter's "*Call to the Unconverted*," and Doddridge's "*Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*;"—works that have, perhaps, beyond all writings merely human, promoted the salvation of immortal souls.

On Original Sin.

If the doctrine of election be objected to, on the ground of difficulties supposed to attach to it, though easily separable from it, the scripture doctrine of original sin, with all its humiliating results, can scarcely be supposed to excite any feelings but those of pride and indignation, and that sort and degree of opposition which such a state of mind naturally induces. The admission of the doctrine is, however, necessary to an accurate understanding of many parts of scripture, particularly the Epistle to the Romans, in which the apostle, assuming the fact as incontrovertible, employs it as a ground of reasoning and instruction. Adam is indeed considered, in Sacred Writ, as standing in the relation of a federal head to his posterity, to whom Christ is also opposed as the covenant head of his people. It is not to be denied that the subject has its difficulties, which, to unenlightened reason may appear insuperable; but the man who derives his religious views immediately from the

Scriptures, will admit the mysterious doctrine in the simplicity of faith, and the silence of acquiescence.

With a view to obviate some of the more popular objections, our author furnishes us with a clear definition of terms, in the following words:—"My design," says he, "is not to examine all the definitions of those persons who have treated on the subject. I will only mention one, which appears to me more congenial with the truth than the rest. We say then, that original sin is a corruption and an hereditary malignity of our nature, which, being diffused throughout the soul, renders us obnoxious to the wrath of God, and produces in us those works which the Scriptures call works of the flesh.

"We must, therefore, observe the two following things: First, that we are so corrupted in all our powers, as, on account of this corruption, to be justly liable to condemnation before God, to whom nothing can be agreeable but righteousness, innocence, and purity. Nor can it be alleged that this obnoxiousness to punishment is caused by another's fault exclusively, as if we were answerable for the sin of our first father, without being ourselves guilty. When we assert, that by the sin of Adam we are made responsible at the tribunal of God, we by no means pretend to say that we are to bear the punishment of his crime, however innocent we may be, and without having deserved it; but we merely say, that being universally enveloped in the curse by his disobedience, he hath subjected us all

to this punishment. Nor hath the punishment alone fallen from him upon us; the infection and corruption communicated by him to us, and to which punishment is due, dwell in us also. On which account, St. Austin, though he sometimes calls original sin *the sin of another*, to shew more evidently that it is transmitted to us by a carnal propagation, maintains, notwithstanding, that it belongs to us individually. The apostle also expressly asserts that death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned; that is to say, because all are involved in original sin, and infected with its stains and pollutions. On which account, even infants are subjected to this condemnation, not simply for the sin of another, but for their own also. For although they have not yet brought forth the fruit of iniquity, the seed of it is, nevertheless, hidden in them; and what is still worse, their whole nature is only the seed of sin and of corruption, which consequently renders them odious in the sight of Deity.

"The other point which remains to be considered, is, that this corruption of our nature is never idle, but produces incessantly new fruits, *those carnal works* of which we have been just speaking, like a furnace continually emitting flames, or a spring sending forth streams. Those who have, therefore, defined original sin, as *the privation of original righteousness, with which man ought to be clothed*, have in these words comprised the substance of that sin; but, in my opinion, have not

sufficiently expressed its force and its efficacy. For our nature is not only devoid of all good, but is also so fruitful of evil, as never to remain inactive.

"It is on this account I have observed, that since the defection of Adam, all the powers of man have been subject to sin. For it was not simply the inferior part of the soul, or sensuality, which inclined him to evil; that unhappy impiety to which we have alluded, took possession also of the highest and most excellent faculty of his mind, as pride gained and penetrated into the most intimate and most profound part of his heart. From whence it appears, how absurd is the conceit of those persons, who restrict the corruption which proceeds from that impiety to sensual appetites, or denominate it a source, a principle of latent fire, which excites to the commission of sin, that part only of the soul which they call *sensuality*. St. Paul not only commands us to mortify sensual appetites, but is desirous that we may be renewed in the spirit of our mind. Hence it appears, that that part of the soul in which its excellence is most conspicuous, is so wounded and corrupted, that it not only simply stands in need of a cure, but of being created anew.

"Those who have the audacity to attribute to God the cause of their sins, under the pretext that we assert, that men are naturally corrupted, would do well to consider the grounds on which they rest, and whether it is not a great crime in them to con-

template the work of God in their corruption, instead of seeking it in the nature which Adam received before his transgression. Let us ever remember to impute our ruin to the depravation of our nature, and not to nature itself, lest we accuse God, the author and preserver of our being, as though our misery proceeded from him. It is perfectly true that this mortal evil is deeply rooted in our nature; but it is certain that this evil hath occurred through sin superinduced. We ought, therefore, to complain of ourselves alone. This the Scriptures particularly inculcate: 'Lo, this only have I found,' says the preacher, 'that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.' From whence it appears clearly, that it is to man alone that his ruin must be imputed, since, having received by the favour of God a natural uprightness, he hath by his own folly fallen into vanity.

"We assert, therefore, that man is naturally corrupted. Not that this corruption springs from the foundation of his nature, but we express ourselves thus, in order to shew that it is rather a quality superadded to human nature, than a property of its substance which hath from the beginning belonged to it. We, however, call this corruption *natural*, in order that no one may imagine, that it is acquired or contracted by example or evil customs; since we all take possession of it from our birth, by a successive and hereditary right. This we do not assert without authority. It is on this account that

the apostle designates mankind, by nature, the children of wrath."*

On Free-will.

Having thus established the fact of the entire depravity of human nature, our author naturally proceeds to discuss the question of free-will, which has given rise to so much controversy in the Christian world, and which is far from being settled at the present day. The sentiments of Calvin on this subject, being appreciated only through the medium of modern Calvinists, who, without any acquaintance with the works of their venerable founder, have adopted his general sentiments without examination, and maintained them in many instances upon different grounds than those upon which he professedly rested them; a few extracts will, perhaps, serve the double purpose of correcting the mistakes too prevalent on the subject, and of doing justice to our author.

"Having shewn," he observes, "that the tyranny of sin, since it subdued Adam our first father, has not only been extended over all men, but has also taken possession of their whole souls, we are now to inquire whether, since we have been thus engaged in this miserable slavery, we have entirely

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* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 1.

lost our liberty, or whether we retain any portion of it, and of what strength it is. But the more easily to throw light upon this question, it is necessary to propose an end to which we may refer the whole dispute. The best means to avoid error, is to consider attentively the dangers which present themselves on either side. When man discovers himself to be destitute of all good, he immediately takes occasion to become careless. For being told that he has no ability in himself to do good, he takes no pains to endeavour so to do, as though he had no concern in it. On the other hand, if any thing good be attributed to him, immediately a false confidence is excited, and he robs God of a part of the glory which is his due. In order to avoid these equally dangerous rocks, we must, in my opinion, take the following course. In convincing man, that in him there dwelleth no good thing, and that he is on all sides surrounded, thus to speak, by a miserable indigence, we should at the same time teach him to aspire both to the good of which he is destitute, and to the liberty of which he is deprived, and that he should attend more earnestly to those duties than if he believed that he was enriched with goodness, and endowed with extensive ability.

"With respect to the first, which consists in making him feel his poverty and his misery, many persons entertain doubts which they need not. It is true that man ought not to be deprived of any thing belonging to him; but it is infinitely impor-

tant to deprive him entirely of vanity and false glory. The Scriptures, when they speak of the excellent dignity with which man was adorned at his creation, refer it to his *having been created in the image of God.* By which they clearly shew that he was not independently rich, and that all his opulence and blessedness was derived to him through the communion which he enjoyed with God, and by the participation of his favours.

"It is, besides, no less useful to us, than it is necessary to support the glory of God undiminished, to deprive us of all the praise of virtue and of wisdom. To walk and to fight depending upon our own strength, what is it but to lean upon a reed which will break under us? On which account, Austin so frequently remarks, 'that those who defend free-will, while they are endeavouring to establish its rights, rather overthrow than support it.'"*

Having thus introduced the subject, our author proceeds to quote the sentiments of the ancient philosophers, as well as those of the fathers of the Christian church; in which, however, we shall not follow him, as the object of the present work is rather to display the sentiments of the reformer, than to treat any particular subject fully. Those who are inclined to pursue this question at length, will see it discussed in a masterly and convincing manner, by the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, in

* In Evangel. Joan. tract 22.—Instit. lib. ii. cap. 2.

his work on the Freedom of the Will, in which the subject is treated with the acumen of a Locke, and the piety of a Watts.

Pursuing the subject, our author observes, "That sentence of Chrysostom has ever pleased me, that *the foundation of our philosophy is humility*. The discourse of Austin still more, where he uses these expressions:—'As Demosthenes, the celebrated Greek orator, being asked what was the first rule of eloquence? replied that it was action; and when asked what was the second, and what the third? gave still the same answer, that it was action; 'So,' saith he, 'if you ask me what are the precepts of the Christian religion, I will reply that the first, the second, and the third are—Humility.' By this humility he by no means intends a disposition of soul, which simply prevents a man, upon the supposition of some good quality, from becoming proud; but a virtue which makes him truly feel what he is; and which compels him to acknowledge, that the only asylum which is open to him, and to which he can repair, is to humble himself before his Creator.

"Let us not, therefore, enter into a contest with the Divine Being on the subject of our rights, as though what we attributed to him constituted our indigence. For as our meanness contrasted shews his grandeur, so the confession which we make of it has ever his mercy for its remedy. I do not, indeed, desire that man should concede to God any part of his rights, without being previously con-

vinced of his imbecility; and that in order to be formed to a true humility, he should divert his attention from his own faculties; but I demand only that, disengaging himself from that fond love which he bears towards himself, and from that ambition which is so natural to him; from his passions, I say, by which he is but too much blinded, he will contemplate himself in the faithful mirror of Scripture.

With what has been commonly alleged from St. Austin, I am far from being dissatisfied, as I have already intimated; which is, that the natural gifts of man have been corrupted by sin, and that the supernatural are entirely abolished. By supernatural gifts must be understood, the light of faith, the uprightness of the heart, with reference to a heavenly life and eternal felicity. Man, then, having abandoned the kingdom of God, has been deprived of the spiritual gifts, with which he was furnished for his salvation. From whence it follows, that he hath been so banished from the kingdom of heaven, that all the faculties and powers which belong to the blessed life of the soul are extinguished, until recovered by regeneration; such as love to God, charity towards our neighbour, the desire to live in holiness and righteousness. Now all these being restored to us by Jesus Christ, and as they cannot be attributed to our nature, since they are foreign to us, it must necessarily be concluded that they were abolished in us. On the other hand, the light of the mind, and uprightness

of heart, we are deprived of; and therein consists the corruption of our natural gifts. For though we still retain a portion of judgment and of intelligence, conjoined with the will, we can by no means say that our understanding is perfect, weak and plunged into thick darkness as it is; nor that our will is pure and holy, since its malice and rebellion are but too well known to us. Thus reason, by which man conceives and judges of things to distinguish good from evil, being a natural gift, could not possibly be entirely extinguished, but became weakened and corrupted in part, so that there appeared no longer any thing but gloomy, terrific ruins.

"In this sense St. John says, that, 'The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;' where he clearly expresses these two things, that in the nature of man, however perverse and corrupt, sparks of light shine, which discover him to be a reasonable animal, distinguished from the brutes by being endowed with intelligence; but that these sparks are, however, smothered by a dense ignorance, from which it is incapable of separating itself to produce any good effect. The will also being inseparable from nature, is equally incapable of being annihilated; but is also become so entirely the slave of base affections, that it is incapable of desiring any thing really good."

That the light of the understanding is not *absolutely extinguished*, our author proceeds to explain, by shewing that an application of the mental pow-

ers to any specific object, is not unattended with utility and pleasure. Applied to *things terrestrial*, such as laws, civil, political, and economical; mechanics, philosophy, and the various arts called *liberal;* the understanding, usefully employed, promotes individual and social happiness, by ameliorating the condition of society, by illustrating the principles, and enforcing the obligations of distributive justice. Man, being a social animal, is impelled by a natural inclination to promote the prosperity of society. Upon this principle, human nature appears pervaded with a general impression that all human societies ought to be governed by certain laws, the principles of which are engraved in the human mind. Nor is the opposition made by individuals to existing laws to be construed into an exception to this general principle; since it demonstrates only the ascendancy of the passions over the judgment, and discovers that they hate in their heart what they approve in their understanding. The variety of opinions discoverable on the legislation of particular governments and individuals, as it includes a recognition of the importance of some form of government, discovers only the imperfection of the light of nature, which is far from indicating the last and most perfect form of government, which should exclude all possibility of exception, and all inducement to opposition.

As human nature is in general distinguished from the brute creation by understanding; the inferior animals by instinct, from inanimate beings; so

there is also a variety of endowments amongst rational beings, calculated, by displaying the sovereignty of the Divine Being in those instances of diversity, to repress the tendency to pride, which is unhappily so general, and so much to be regretted. The endowments of individuals are, by Divine Providence, adapted to the stations which they occupy, and the duties which they are called to the discharge of. But in this diversity we are furnished with various evidence of an impress of divinity; surrounded, indeed, by much acquired darkness and imperfection; but still indicative of the original greatness, and perpetual responsibility of every human agent.

But, if we inquire into the capabilities of human reason, with reference to seeking of the kingdom of God, or comprehending heavenly wisdom, we shall soon perceive a miserable deficiency, which admits of one only remedy—Divine illumination. "Heavenly wisdom," according to our author, "consists in knowing the three following things: First, what is the nature of God; secondly, what is the nature of his favour and good-will towards us, which includes our salvation; and, finally, what rule we ought to follow, in order to conform our lives to his law. With regard to the two first articles, and especially the second, the most subtle, vivacious, and enlightened persons, are totally blind. I do not deny but that in the books of the philosophers we meet with beautiful and exquisite sentences respecting the Divinity, written with a

great deal of ingenuity and elegance; but there always appears so much inconstancy, and so little firmness, that it is easy to perceive their imaginations were wild and confused. It is true, as we have already remarked, that God hath given them some glimpse of his majesty, that they might not cover their impiety with a vain pretext of ignorance. But they have so seen objects, as not to be conducted thereby to pursue truth—much less have they arrived at it. These persons, with their pretended illuminations, may, I conceive, be well compared to a man, who, finding himself at night in the middle of a field, in a thunder-storm, sees by the flashes of lightning a considerable extent round about him, but it is only instantaneous. So that all this light is of no use to conduct him, since it disappears so suddenly, that before he is able to advance a step, he is replunged into darkness; thus is it wholly impossible for him to recover his road by such a help. Besides, those sparks of truth which shine occasionally in the books of the philosophers, by what clouds of errors are they not encompassed? Let us, therefore, conclude that human reason can never by its own strength discover truth; that it can never of itself comprehend who is the true God, and in what relation he will stand to us.

"St. Paul is remarkably clear in treating this subject. Having assumed that the wisdom of man is full of folly and of vanity, he thus concludes the subject: 'But the natural man receiveth not the

things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' Who then is this natural man, unless it be him who prides himself on the light of nature? But, naturally, such a man understands nothing in spiritual things. Wherefore? Is it owing to idleness, which, engrossing his mind, makes him neglect to acquire the knowledge of them? By no means; for should he employ his utmost strength and intelligence, he would still fall short of it, for they must be spiritually discerned, saith St. Paul, since it is by a spiritual judgment, disentangled from carnal passions, that we ought to judge thereof. By which he intends, that, being hidden and impenetrable to the understandings of men, they have been discovered and manifested to us by the revelation of the Spirit. So that all the mysteries of the wisdom of God are but folly to man, until he becomes enlightened by his grace.

"What he denies, however, to men, he attributes to God in another place, beseeching him to bestow upon the Ephesians *the spirit of wisdom and of revelation*. By these words we learn, that whatever wisdom or revelation the world contains, is a gift of God. What farther does he say?—'That he would enlighten the eyes of their understanding.' They are, therefore, blind, since they stand in need of a new illumination. What does he farther add?—'That ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.' He who presumes upon

having more intelligence than he really possesses, is so much the blinder, as he does not perceive his own blindness.

"But we must now consider that other faculty of the soul, the *will*, in which free-will properly consists, if indeed there be any in man. For we have already seen that the choice depends rather upon the will, than the understanding. And first, lest what hath been taught by the philosophers, and commonly received, should serve to establish the uprightness of the human will, that is, that all creatures desire that good which is suitable to them; let it be observed, that the force of free-will ought not to be considered with reference to that desire or appetite, which proceeds rather from a propensity of nature than the deliberation of the mind. The schoolmen even confess that the action of free-will consists in the application of reason to two opposing claims. By which they mean that the object of the appetite ought to be submitted to the choice of the will, and that deliberation ought to precede choice. If we examine, indeed, the nature of that desire which man feels naturally after *good*, we shall find that he possesses this in common with animals, who all desire their own advantage, and who, when any image of advantage strikes their senses, pursue it with all their might. The question, then, whether man is incited by a natural feeling to desire his good, has nothing to do with free-will, which, to be truly free, ought to discern the good which it desires by the light of

reason; and, having distinguished it, to make choice of it; and having chosen it, to pursue the enjoyment of it.

"But in order to remove every difficulty, we must here be on our guard against two false conclusions into which we may fall. For the word *appetite* does not signify the proper motion of the will, but only a natural inclination. Secondly, the word *good* is not to be understood as meaning righteousness and virtue, but those things which all creatures desire, as being suitable and proper to the preservation and convenience of their being. To which it must be farther added, that though man passionately desires to obtain what is good and suitable for him, he nevertheless does not pursue it, nor apply himself to search after it. For there is no person who does not desire eternal happiness, and to whom it would not be gratifying; but no one aspires after it, until he is excited to it by the Holy Spirit. Since then this natural desire by no means proves that man possesses a free-will, as the inclination which inferior creatures have, to tend to the perfection of their nature, by no means proves that there is any freedom in them; we must now consider whether the will of man, with reference to other things, is so corrupted that it can only produce evil; or whether any portion of it remain entire, from whence any good desires may proceed.

"Those who assert that by the original favour of God we are capable of willing effectually, ap-

pear to imply that there is in the soul a faculty capable of aspiring voluntarily to that which is good, but that this faculty is so weak as not to be able to rise to a firm and solid affection, or to excite man to exert himself to obtain the enjoyment of it. Nor is there any doubt but that the schoolmen have commonly followed this opinion, which they have taken from Origen, and other ancient doctors, so that when they consider man simply with respect to his nature, they represent him to us in the language of St. Paul: 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' But in this way they overthrow the whole argument which the apostle maintains in that passage where he speaks of the Christian struggle (which he treats more briefly in the Epistle to the Galatians) that the faithful experience continually in themselves, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. Now they have not the spirit in a way of nature, but by the grace of regeneration. That the apostle is speaking of those who are regenerated is clear; for having said that there was no good thing in him, he adds, in explanation, that he is speaking of his flesh. On which account he declares that he does not commit the evil, and says that it is sin which dwelleth in him. What is the import of the qualification, 'In me, that is, in my flesh?' It is certainly as though he had said, There dwells no good thing in me of myself, seeing that nothing good is to be found in my flesh. From whence arises the apology,—*It is*

no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. Which is true of the faithful alone, who are aiming at doing good, with reference to their minds. Besides, the conclusion which he adds, manifestly shews this: 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.' Who could experience such a combat but the person who, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, still feels the remains of sin in his flesh? On which account St. Austin, having sometimes explained this passage of the nature of man, retracted afterwards his explication, as false and ill founded.

"If we once allow, indeed, that man possesses the smallest inclination to that which is good, without the grace of God, how shall we answer the apostle, who denies that we are capable of even thinking a good thought?* What shall we reply to Jehovah, who declares to us by the mouth of Moses, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually?† Since, then, they have imposed upon themselves by the false interpretation of a passage, we must not be influenced by their fancy. Let us rather listen to what Jesus Christ addresses to us in his gospel, that whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. But we are all sinners by nature; it follows, therefore, that we are all naturally under the yoke of sin. That if man be altogether subjected to the

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. † Gen. vi. 5.

dominion of sin, we must necessarily conclude, that the will, which is one of his principal faculties, is also captive, and bound by the strongest fetters. What St. Paul also asserts, that it is God who worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure, is not to be maintained upon the supposition of our will preceding the grace of the Holy Spirit. Far be from us then, the opinion of all those, who tell us of I know not what preparations and dispositions in our nature, to embrace that which is good. I confess that believers, after the example of David, beseech God to dispose their hearts to obey his law; but it is to be remembered, that the very desire to pray proceeds from God: which may easily be gathered from the words of that holy prophet. For, beseeching God to create in him a new heart, he does not even attribute the beginning of such a creation to himself. Let us, therefore, rather receive what St. Austin addresses to us:—'God,' saith he, 'hath prevented thee in all things. Prevent then his anger —but how? Confess that you have received all from him; that all the good which you possess proceeds from him, and all the evil from yourselves. Nothing,' saith he, 'belongs to us but sin.'"*

* Instit. lib. ii. cap. 2.

On Justification.

From the preceding quotations on the subject of Free-will, we can scarcely fail to be convinced that man, degraded and rendered utterly impotent by the fall, must be absolutely indebted to foreign assistance for his recovery and elevation. To a mind adequately impressed with this conviction, the question, "*How shall I be just with God?*" will not fail to recur with exquisitely painful interest, until answered by an accurate and comprehensive view of the doctrine of justification, derived from the infallible source of truth. When it is considered that the law of God enjoins *universal* and *perpetual* obedience, it must be evident that a single transgression must for ever preclude the possibility of being justified by a broken covenant; since to condemn is all the law can do, whose reiterated language is, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." It is evident, therefore, that such a righteousness as can alone be available for justification, can never proceed from the law of Moses (as the apostle asserts), unless the same law which constitutes sin, and threatens the guilty with punishment, can at the same time be supposed to abate its claims and tolerate iniquity, which, as it supposes it to be mutable, is absurd. To conceive of the Divine Being as enacting a law illustrative of the immutable holiness of his nature, and to suppose him to surrender the execution of its pe-

nalties on the ground of a partial obedience to its precepts, is an implication that either the law is excessive in its demands, or that the Supreme Legislator is merciful at the expense of his justice; the former of which arraigns the wisdom, and the latter the equity of Him who is infinite in counsel, and essentially just. The nature and importance of justification, clearly illustrated by the apostle, in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and in the first verse, furnish us with convincing evidence on the interesting subject. That justification is a gratuitous act of God, placing us in a state of salvation, in consideration of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, is evident from the connexion of the words, which by a very unhappy division of chapters are separated from the premises from which they are an inference. The formal ground of justification, as stated in the Scriptures, appears to be the righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith; consequently, all those passages which speak of justification by faith, must be considered as standing in direct opposition to works, as forming any ground of acceptance with God; and as containing an implied sense, that it is not as a meritorious principle, that faith justifies; but as it is the appropriation of a gracious provision, adapted to the feelings of an enlightened conscience. "It is necessary," says our author, "to explain this subject, and so to consider this article of justification by faith, as to be impressed with its being one of the principal points of the Chris-

tian religion, that we may apply ourselves to the examination of it, with all the attention and precision of which we are capable. For as we have no foundation upon which to rest our salvation, unless we know in what light God views us, and his will concerning us; neither can we without this knowledge have any support upon which we can place the reverence and piety which are due to him. Let us, therefore, inquire into the meaning of those expressions—*To be justified before God; to be justified by faith; or, to be justified by works.*

"As iniquity is abominable in the eyes of God, it is impossible for man to find favour in his sight as a sinner, or while he is considered under that character. For wherever sin is found, the wrath and vengeance of God are to be found also. He is, therefore, justified who is not considered as a sinner, but a righteous person; and who, on that ground, is qualified to stand before the tribunal of God, where sinners must appear with confusion. For example, if a man wrongfully accused, appear before the tribunal of an equitable judge, and be absolved and declared innocent after due examination, it must of course be said that he is justly cleared, and that he is justified from the crime of which he was accused. We say also that man is justified before God, when, being separated from the number of sinners, God is the witness and asserter of his righteousness. Thus we say man is justified by his works, when his life exhibits such purity and holiness as merit to be approved before

the tribunal of God as a perfect righteousness; or when, by the innocence and perfection of his works, he can satisfy his judgment. On the contrary, he is said to be justified by faith, who, excluded from the righteousness of works, receives by faith the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and who, clothed in that divine righteousness, appears in the presence of God, not as a sinner, but as a righteous person. We say, then, in a word, that our justification is a gratuitous acceptation, by which God, receiving us into his favour, considers us as just; and we shall also maintain that this acceptation consists in the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures furnish us with many evident testimonies to confirm what we have now advanced. I will only allege a few, in which the subject of justification is expressly treated. When St. Luke relates, that all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God; and Jesus Christ declares that wisdom is justified of all her children; the word justify, in those passages, cannot possibly signify that men confer righteousness upon God, which ever resides essentially and perfectly in him, though all the world should conspire to deprive him of it; or that they can render the doctrine of salvation just, since it is so in itself; but both methods of speaking imply, that those whom the evangelist mentions, attributed to God, and to his word, the glory and praise due to them. On the other hand, when Jesus Christ reproaches the Pharisees

with 'justifying themselves before men,' he is not to be understood as meaning that they aimed at the acquisition of righteousness by doing good; but that from an ambitious motive they aimed at procuring the reputation of being righteous, though they were entirely devoid of righteousness itself.

"With regard to the subject in hand, St. Paul observes, that God, in the Scriptures, foreseeing that he would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel, unto Abraham, saying, 'In thee shall all nations be blessed.' How are we, therefore, to understand this expression, unless it be that God considers them as righteous through the medium of faith? Thus, where it is said that God 'might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,' what meaning can we attach to the expression, unless it be, that by means of faith he delivereth sinners from that condemnation which they deserve by their impiety? which he expresses still more clearly afterwards, where he exclaims, 'Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.' For it is equivalent to saying, Who shall accuse those whom God absolves? Who shall dare to condemn those whom God undertakes to defend? To justify is, therefore, no other than to absolve him who is accused, and to free him from condemnation as though his personal innocence had been acknow-

ledged. Thus, since God justifies through the intervention of Jesus Christ, he absolves us not on the ground of our personal innocence, but by imputing to us the righteousness of his Son; so that we are accounted righteous in Jesus Christ, although not so in ourselves.

"But farther, to abandon a dispute about the word, if we consider with attention the thing itself, as represented to us in the Scriptures, there can be no difficulty. For St. Paul makes use of the word *acceptance*, when he intends to shew that God justifies us. 'We are,' says he, 'predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.'* The apostle's meaning here is synonymous with what he expresses in other passages; that God justifies us freely by his grace. In the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, he asserts primarily that we are just, because God accounts us so by his grace; after which, he makes our justification consist in the remission of sins. 'Thus,' says he, 'David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.' It is evident that he there speaks, not of a detached part

* Eph. i. 5.

of our justification, but of our justification entire. He asserts also that the prophet David expresses it, by pronouncing those happy, who have obtained the gratuitous pardon of their faults. From whence it appears evidently, that he considers as two opposite points, being justified, and being considered as guilty. But there is no passage more express in proof of my assertion, than that in which he teaches, that the foundation and essence of the gospel consists in reconciling us unto God, because God is willing to receive us into his favour, by not imputing to us our sins. Let the reader examine carefully the whole text of the apostle. For he immediately adds, that Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us; expressing thereby the method of our reconciliation, and understanding, consequently, nothing by the word to *reconcile*, but, to justify. Nor can his expression in another place be maintained, unless we are considered just before God in Jesus Christ, and out of ourselves."*

Not to pursue our author in his refutations of the wild reveries of Osiander, whom he opposes; let us listen to the language in which he celebrates the praise of this illustrious doctrine, as it secures and promotes that peace of conscience, which passes all understanding, and includes the pledge and antipast of celestial bliss.

"If we inquire," says he, "how the conscience may become tranquil, and rejoice before God, we

* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 11.

shall find that it is not possible for peace and joy to reign there, unless God of his pure mercy confer upon us his own righteousness. What Solomon observes in his Proverbs, ought ever to be impressed upon our minds: 'Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?'* There is certainly no man whose heart is not crowded with impurities. Let the most righteous and the most perfect examine their conscience and their conduct. What must be the issue of such a process? Dare they quietly take their repose, as though they had gained their cause by pleading against God, and had henceforth nothing to transact with him? On the contrary, if they are estimated according to their works, will they not be rent by dreadful torments, while they experience that they carry about with them the cause of their condemnation? The conscience, as it respects God, must either enjoy peace with him, without fearing his judgment; or be in perpetual alarms, and, as it were, besieged by inconceivable terrors. We, therefore, make no progress while disputing about righteousness, unless we establish such an one, upon the firmness of which our souls may rest and be supported before the tribunal of God.

"It is, therefore, not without reason that the apostle urges this argument, whose words I abundantly prefer to my own. 'If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.'† He infers, that faith

* Prov. xx. 9. † Rom. iv. 14.

becomes useless and void, if righteousness respects the merits of our works, or depends upon the observance of the law.

"The ground of assurance is explained by this apostle, and stated to be the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.* As if he had said, our souls can never be in a calm and tranquil state, unless we are firmly persuaded that we are acceptable to God. Whence, personating believers universally, he exclaims, 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?'† For until we have reached this haven, the least storm will be sufficient to alarm us, every gust of wind will make us tremble; but when God shall espouse our cause as our Shepherd, we shall walk with confidence through darkness, and even through the shadow of death."‡

On the Perseverance of the Saints.

Against the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, an opposition has been raised and perpetuated, not merely on a presumption of the erroneous nature, but also of the dangerous tendency of the sentiment. How far it deserves such treatment, may be ascertained from the following view of the doctrine itself.

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* Rom. v. 5. † Rom. viii. 35. ‡ Instit. lib. iii. cap. 13.

"It is affirmed, that those whom Jesus Christ hath enlightened with the knowledge of himself, and introduced into the bosom of his church, are received, and taken under his protection; and of all whom he receives, it is farther said, that the Father hath committed them unto him, and given him the charge of them, to conduct them to eternal life. What more can be desired? Jesus Christ proclaims in his gospel, that the Father hath placed under his protection all those whose salvation he hath decreed.* Do we wish to know whether God is careful about our salvation? let us examine his word, and inquire if he hath not intrusted it to Jesus Christ, whom he hath appointed to be the Saviour of all who are intrusted to him. If we doubt whether Jesus Christ hath placed us under his protection, he anticipates the doubt by representing himself as our Shepherd, and declaring that he will receive us into the number of his sheep, if we will hear his voice. Let us, then, embrace him, since he presents himself to us with so much benignity, and anticipates our reception. Doubtless he will place us in the number of the sheep of his flock, and guard us in his fold.

"But to this it may be objected, that we ought to be solicitous with respect to what may happen to us; and that when we contemplate futurity, our infirmities admonish us to be continually solicitous. For, as St. Paul says, the people of God

* John vi. 37; and xvii. 6—12.

'are called according to his purpose.' Jesus Christ also informs us that, though 'many are called, few are chosen.' St. Paul himself, in another place, cautions us against security; 'Wherefore,' says he, 'let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.' Experience, indeed, teaches us that our faith and calling are but of comparatively little consequence, unless perseverance, which is not universally bestowed, be joined to them.—To this I reply, that Jesus Christ hath delivered us from this uneasiness and perplexity. For there can be no doubt but that his promises relate to futurity. 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. This is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.'* 'My sheep,' saith he, elsewhere, 'hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all: and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.'†

"By declaring, also, that every plant not planted by his heavenly Father, should be rooted up, he teaches that, on the contrary, it is not possible that those who have taken deep root in God, should be rooted up. In unison with which are

* John vi. 37, 39, 40. † John x. 27—29.

those words of the apostle John: 'They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.' It was on this ground that the apostle Paul exulted so boldly over life and death, over things present and things to come. Which could only be founded upon the certain persuasion of his perseverance. And he doubtless addresses himself to the whole body of the elect, in the following expression: 'Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.' David, also, feeling his faith shaken by the violence of temptation, leans upon this prop: 'The Lord,' saith he, 'will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever; forsake not the works of thine own hands.' Besides which, it is not to be doubted that Jesus Christ, praying for the elect, besought for them what he requested for St. Peter, 'that their faith might not fail.' From whence we conclude that they are out of danger of falling into apostacy, since the Son of God having prayed on their behalf, that they might remain firm and constant, was not denied his petition. What does Jesus Christ, therefore, intend to teach us here? Certainly, that our eternal salvation is secured, by the circumstance of our having been once given to Jesus Christ.

"But it occurs daily (it will be said), that those who appear to belong to Jesus Christ, fall away and revolt. And that even in the passage where

he declares, that none whom the Father had given him could be lost, he excepts the son of perdition. This is true; but it is on the other hand certain, that those persons have never adhered to Jesus Christ with that confidence of heart, upon which we assert the assurance of our election to be founded. 'They went out from us,' as we have just heard from St. John, 'but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt, have continued with us.' I do not deny but that they may have the same marks of their calling as those of the elect; but I cannot allow them that firm and solid foundation of election which I enjoin the faithful to seek in the word of the gospel. Let not these examples, therefore, make us uneasy, nor prevent our tranquil repose upon the promises of the Lord Jesus, in which he expressly declares, that the Father hath given him all those who have received him with a genuine faith, and that none of them shall perish, since he is their guardian and protector. We shall speak elsewhere of Judas.

"As to what relates to St. Paul, he by no means absolutely prohibits all kinds of confidence, but a certain carnal indolence, and contempt of other men; an indolence which extinguishes humility, overthrows the respect and reverence which we owe to God, and which leads men to forget his benefits. For in that passage he is addressing the Gentiles, whom he teaches that they ought not to insult the Jews, under the pretext, that their having been rejected, they had been substituted in their

place. The fear which he requires is not a fear which should induce consternation, but a fear which, instructing us to revere with humility the grace of God, abates in no degree the confidence which we feel in him, as we have elsewhere explained it.

"Add to this, that he is not addressing his discourse particularly to individual believers, but in general to the sects which then existed amongst men. For the church was at that time divided into two parties; and envy and pride being the cause of that divorce, St. Paul admonishes the Pagans, that if they were put in the place of the holy people, peculiarly consecrated to God, such a circumstance ought to furnish them with a motive to fear and modesty. Besides, there were many of them filled with vanity, whose pride and presumption it was necessary to overthrow. We have also seen already, that our hope must be extended to futurity, and even beyond death; and that nothing is more opposed to the nature of hope, than to be in doubt and uncertainty with respect to what may happen to us in futurity." *

The above quotations will, no doubt, convey to the mind of the reader an accurate conception of the real sentiments of our author. The importance of those sentiments will justify, it is hoped, the extent of quotation adopted, and supersede the necessity of an apology.

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* Instit. lib. iii. cap. 24.

A considerable degree of interest having been excited on the subject of the doctrinal sentiments of the Church of England, it would perhaps appear a real defect in a work of this description, to decline all notice of the subject. To the writer of the present work, the coincidence of the Articles and Liturgy of the Church of England with the leading truths of Calvinism, appears so evident, that nothing more can be necessary, in his opinion, than a simple and unprejudiced comparison, to establish the conviction.

By those who are acquainted with ecclesiastical history, it will also be recollected, that Calvin revised the English Liturgy; and that upon his suggestion, several important alterations were made in it. That he corresponded with Cranmer, and that on doctrinal sentiments, there existed an entire uniformity of sentiment between the English and foreign reformers. Differing widely as did Cranmer and Calvin, on the subject of ecclesiastical discipline, it must be obvious to every one, that the instances in which the judgment of Calvin was consulted, must relate chiefly, if not exclusively, to doctrine. To denominate the Articles of the Church of England *Arminian*, is an instance of the grossest absurdity, as they were drawn up long before Arminius was *born*. To persons disposed to investigate the subject fully, the writer would

earnestly recommend *Toplady's Historic Proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England*, in which work the fact is absolutely *demonstrated*.*

"With a modesty worthy of himself, the Bishop of Lincoln has recently published a work, entitled, '*A Refutation* of Calvinism.' Before his lordship writes any more 'Refutations' of systems which he does not understand, it is to be hoped he will at least inform himself as it respects his *own* side of the controversy. Besides imputing to the Calvinists some things which belong to *no existing sect;* some in a sense which *they disown;* and some which are *peculiar to other sects;* more than half of his lordship's quotations from the fathers have *no* bearing on the subject; and several of the remainder militate against his own avowed opinions. But his lordship's master-piece consists in his quoting, as the language of modern Calvinism, a passage from one of the Homilies of the Church of England!!! His lordship being therefore a controversial suicide, the verdict of a jury of critics can be no other than that of *felo de se*."†

The coincidence of Calvinism with our common Christianity, being so intimate, as to subject its as-

* See also "The Fathers, the Reformers, and the Formularies of the Church of England, in Harmony with Calvin, and against the Bishop of Lincoln. By a Layman."—A masterly work.

† Speech of Mr. John Mackenzie, at the Aniversary Meeting of the Auxiliary Bible Society, for the County of Huntingdon, 1812.

sailants to the charge of criminal ignorance; the earnest caution of an eminent divine, lately deceased, who was grieved to observe with what "little knowledge of the subject some adventured to write against Calvinism," deserves the serious attention of every inquirer after religious truth:—"Take especial care, before you aim your shafts at Calvinism, that you know what is Calvinism, and what is not: that in the mass of doctrine which it is of late become the fashion to abuse under the name of Calvinism, you can distinguish with certainty between that part of it which is nothing better than Calvinism, and that which belongs to our common Christianity, and the general faith of the reformed churches; lest, when you mean only to fall foul of Calvinism, you should unwarily attack something more sacred and of higher origin."*

From the preceding Memoirs of the Life and Writings of our Reformer, it is not, perhaps, an undue inference, that the reader is disposed to place the subject of them in the very first rank of eminent and important characters. Endowed with the brightest intellect, and enriched with the most exalted attainments, it is certain that Calvin had but few equals amongst his contemporaries. But it is neither the grasp of his intellect, nor the extent of

* Bishop Horsley's Last Charge.

his attainments, which constitutes the point of admiration in his character. It is the consecration of his attainments, and of his energies, to the best of causes, the multiplicity and severity of his labours, and their practical influence upon society, that constitute the elevation which distinguishes him from inferior characters, and fixes the gaze of posterity.

Of his eminence in later life, his expanding mind gave early promise; for at the age of twenty-two, he was accounted the most learned man in Europe. That he redeemed this pledge, is matter of historic record. His works constitute a monument of posthumous fame, more durable than brass; and he is by nothing more distinguished, than by that attribute of a great mind—humility. In all his works, we discover that grandeur and purity of mind, which necessarily results from the understanding being brought into contact with the verities of the Christian faith. He had surveyed the heavenly land with accuracy and delight; and the clusters which he bore from thence, constituted his fair report. Next to the inspired writers themselves, there is, perhaps, no author who has infused so much of the spirit of Christianity into his works. The richest views of doctrinal truth are every where combined with the practical claims of Christianity. We feel ourselves in the presence of a teacher, who not only illustrates with perspicuity, but enforces with authority, the doctrines and precepts of religion; and the admiration we feel for his genius is only surpassed by the veneration which we entertain for his piety.

When it is recollected that the writings of Calvin fill twenty folio volumes, that he maintained a constant and extensive correspondence on the subject of the Reformation, and the state of the Protestant churches; and, that he was continually employed in preaching—in giving theological lectures—and in assisting at all the deliberations of the Consistory; it might be supposed, as has been observed, that his "soul of fire" must have been supported by "a frame of adamant;" he was, however, the subject of numerous and painful maladies, which rendered his exertions almost incredible. No man ever better understood or exemplified the "divine philosophy" of redeeming time. He lived at a great rate; and must be estimated not by his years, which were comparatively few, but by his labours, which were great and many. In his own person he practically refuted the calumny which charged his system of theology with *inactivity*. Had he anticipated eternal life, as the wages of laborious piety, he could not have exemplified a more blameless life; but he looked for it, as "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Influenced by gratitude for the incipient blessings of salvation received, burning with love to God, kindled by the contemplation of his moral beauty, and acting perpetually with reference to the divine honour; he described a course equally brilliant and useful, imparting light and heat to the hemisphere in which he shone. In the presence of this "greater light," the stars of pagan philosophy, of corrupt tradition, and

of false systems of Christianity, are blotted out of the moral firmament; and it is only by his obscuration, that they can have "leave to shine."

The intrepidity of Calvin, equally uniform and effective, was by no means constitutional. We have his own testimony in proof that he was "naturally timid." His courage was, therefore, that of *principle*, sustained by a consciousness of integrity, and elevated by the dignity of the cause in which he was embarked. The fear of the Supreme Being, when it is radical and uniform, renders the mind insensible to the influence of constitutional fear and anxiety, and arms it for all the contingencies of the mortal conflict. Though Calvin was not called to the *act* of martyrdom, there can be no doubt but that he possessed the *principle;* and would have exemplified it by embracing the stake, had he been conducted thither by the combined cruelty of earth and hell. It is not, however, to great and splendid single acts, that principle is confined: there is more of unequivocal greatness of mind and moral triumph, in the daily martyrdom of which the apostle speaks, when he says, "I die daily," and when the martyr is his own executioner, than in any single act which can be opposed to it. The courage of our reformer was eminently of this description; it was not so much a triumph over others as over *himself;*—a consecration of his being, and of all his temporal interests, to a cause which was supreme in his estimate, and which admitted of no compromise.

The aptness of the human mind to pass from one extreme to another, is proverbial; and perhaps was never more strikingly illustrated than in the French Revolution, when the bulk of the population passed from the extreme of *superstition* to that of *infidelity*. At the period of the Reformation, however, though the renunciation of popery was *absolute*, the wholesome influence of the reformers upon the public mind secured the veneration of primitive Christianity, which gilded, as it rose, the summits of Germany, of France, and of Great Britain. The instrumentality of Calvin, in arresting the march of the human mind in its passage from superstition, is evident in the matured establishment of the reformed religion in France, of which he was the principal founder. The system of ecclesiastical discipline which he gave to Geneva, consolidated the reformation in France, and realized all the practical benefits, which might have been anticipated from so scriptural an exposition of the nature and claims of a Christian church. Built upon a rock, the battering-ram of the author of "Ecclesiastical Polity" has not even disturbed the cement which unites the matchless edifice.

Of the admirers of the subject of these Memoirs, the author would now take leave, by remarking, that the most solid praise consists in a careful imitation of him whom we admire.

THE END.

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